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So they read in the book in the law of God distinctly, and gave the sense, and caused them to understand the reading.—*Nehemiah 8. 8.*

RELIGIOUS THOUGHT AND ACTIVITY.

Of the 170,000 active clergymen in the United States only 1671 paid an income tax on incomes in excess of $3000 last year, while over 21,000 lawyers and more than 20,000 doctors did pay such an income tax.

Of three and a half million Jews in the United States over two millions, or almost 60 per cent, are in New York City.

It is said that the further west one goes from New York the harder it is to get Jews to accept Jesus of Nazareth as Saviour and Lord. New York Jewry determines the religious and political complexion of American Jewry. What the Jew of Denver thinks or believes makes no impression on the Jew of New York, but the Denver Jew does put a whole lot of value on what New York Jews are doing and saying and believing.

This is also true as regards the relation of the New York Jew to the Jews of the whole world. Russian Jewry, English Jewry, German Jewry, all look to New York Jews for leadership. The "Jewish Chronicle" of London says that the Jews of New York have the deciding of the destiny of the Jews of the world.

S. L. Smith of Nashville, Tenn., field agent of the **Julius Rosenwald Fund,** which was created to assist in the building of better Negro rural schools, reported at a Hampton Institute conference of state agents for colored schools throughout the South that up to April 30 there had been built 1700 "Rosenwald schools" and 49 teachers' homes at a total cost of $6,257,492. Of this amount Negroes had contributed $1,600,667, or 25.6 per cent; white people, $352,199, or 5.6 per cent; public funds, $3,100,148, or 49.5 per cent; and Julius Rosenwald of Chicago $1,204,478, or 19.3 per cent.

The number of buildings follows: Alabama, 260; Arkansas, 84; Florida, 7; Georgia, 73; Kentucky, 73; Louisiana, 173; Maryland, 40; Mississippi, 213; North Carolina, 287; Oklahoma, 35; South Carolina, 116; Tennessee, 146; Texas, 103; and Virginia, 139.

While 474 Rosenwald schools are one-teacher and 650 are two-teacher schools, there are also the following groups: three-teacher, 275; four-teacher, 165; five-teacher, 56; six-teacher, 55; seven-teacher, 6; eight-teacher, 10; nine-teacher, 2; ten-teacher, 3; and one school each of the eleven-, twelve-, fourteen-, and sixteen-teacher types.

In response to the desire of the Sunday school forces the observance of **Father and Son Week** has been changed from February to November 11-18, centering it around Armistice Day. The change has been ratified by the Sunday School Council of Interdenominational Churches, by the International Sunday School Conference of Religious Education, and the International Committee of the Young Men's Christian Association, whose boys' work committee will continue actively to promote this idea, which has become of worldwide significance.

Father and Son Week in the coming November will be the sixth annual observance. Now that it has become an established affair and of national scope, it is felt that in order to accomplish the objectives desired, the Father and Son idea should be an all-the-year-round program.

In view of this, the Father and Son movement is being introduced this year with the thought that a year's program will be launched annually at the time of each Father and Son week in the future.

During the last two years the **Chicago Federation of Churches** has tried the plan of setting a goal for increase of membership of Protestant churches, and then putting through a campaign to attain it. The first year the Federation set a goal of 30,000 new members, and for five months pushed a campaign. The goal was exceeded, over 37,000 members being secured. A second attempt was for 40,000 new members, and after a six months' campaign the number of new members recorded is 40,394.

Lutherans gained the largest number of any single body, due in part to searches made for Lutherans who had never before disclosed themselves. Their gain was 10,000, a fourth of the whole. Methodists stood next, with a gain of 9600. Presbyterian churches took in 5800 members, Episcopal 3000, Congregational 2700, and Disciples 1000. Chicago has 35 churches that are allied to no denomination, and together they received 1800 new members.

The Federation of Chicago has a well organized committee, and is to set a new goal for the coming year.

The American Sunday School Union.

This Union held its 106th annual meeting last May. The Union in its 106 years has organized 138,000 schools, into which it has gathered five and a half million people, chiefly children. During the past seventeen years there have been organized out of the schools it planted 1139 churches of different denominations.

This society has pioneered the way, going into communities where no Christian work was being done for the children. As soon as the way opened for church organization it has left the denominational choice to the people themselves.

The past year has been one of the most vigorous in its history. It has either organized or reorganized 1800 schools. Adding these to those already in operation, it has supervised the work of 6000 schools, most of them meeting in public school houses, but some 600 in abandoned churches, 250 in public halls, 150 in farm homes, and others in all sorts of places like railroad stations, box cars, under brush arbors, etc. Its missionaries have paid great attention to home visitation, having made more than 200,000 visits to families, and in the course of this work distributed over 19,000 Gospels, Testaments, and Bibles. For its schools and others desiring a sound, union, evangelical literature, it has issued a dozen periodicals, with a circulation of some 2,000,000, and published 200,000 books, booklets, and other school requisites. More than 5000 persons, young and old, have professed conversion in connection with its work during the year, and forty-seven churches have grown out of its schools. Its work covers the United States, and is supported by some 25,000 givers.

UNITED ACTIVITIES.

Promotional Agencies Show Striking Agreement on Methods and Programs.

The promotional agencies of twenty of the leading denominations of the country have issued a joint statement concerning their aims and methods. The document has an unusual interest for two reasons. In the first place, it is probably the most careful attempt which has yet been made to formulate the policies of the various denominations with reference to their promotional effort. In the second place, the statement discloses a striking similarity in the developments which those promotional movements have undergone and in their conclusions as to what the future path should be.

The statement is the outgrowth of a recent conference of representatives of the promotional agencies held under the auspices of the Federal Council of the Churches in Baltimore. Among the resolutions adopted one was that the constant objective of all forward and promotional work is to develop and strengthen the whole normal work of the individual church by the larger enlistment of life and possessions for the service of the kingdom of God. The success of all such efforts depends upon the voluntary response made by the individual churches to the suggested programs and methods, offered not with any coercive authority by official groups, but as the best experience gathered from the church at

large and to be adapted to conditions of wide variation. Another was that foremost in all forward and promotional work must be the cultivation of the ideals of stewardship of life and possession, emphasizing by group study, conferences and preaching, the following principles of stewardship: God is the owner of all; we are his stewards, and must account for all that we have; God requires acknowledgment of his ownership by giving a definite proportion of our income for his service; we should use all of the rest—what we spend and what we save,—in ways that are pleasing to God.

Working for a More Unified Program of Religious Education.

The findings of a conference held last May at Forest Hills, Long Island, attended by representatives of various agencies carrying on the many-sided tasks of religious education, have just been made public. These findings represent the consensus of judgment of the conference concerning the need for a correlation of the existing programs of religious education and the principles on which an effective correlation can be secured.

A human being clad in garments manufactured by a score of different designers each working without reference to the others would be a grotesque object indeed. Yet this is, in the judgment of those who were present at the Forest Hills conference, a fair illustration of the manner in which the churches undertake to provide the ideas, motives, activities and attitudes which constitute the present program of religious education. In addition to the denominational Sunday school boards, nearly a score of other agencies, all unrelated, participate in constructing some part of the program of training through the Sunday school, week-day church school, vacation school, mission study classes, young people's society, Y. M. C. A., Y. W. C. A., Scout or Camp Fire organizations or other local groups. As a result, the child, who is the object of all this teaching, is pulled hither and thither by various partial programs, all competing for his time and attention, and none considering just how its own contribution is related to what the other programs are providing.

Local initiative and experimentation in program-making are to be encouraged and stimulated, even in the less resourceful communities, rather than the adoption of prescribed programs of activities.

In order to make available a variety of source material in a form usable by local communities, and in order to give them stimulus, help and guidance, typical programs should be developed nationally. Such programs should grow out of local experimentation, and every effort should be made to prevent them from becoming fixed and static.

THE RADIO SERMON.

The radio sermon is becoming a serious problem in some localities. When a man can sit at ease in his home or even in his automobile and "pick up" the best preacher in the metropolis, he is under temptation to stay away from the little church at the corner, or the larger one on Main Street. If the Protestant preacher winces under the competition which radio has suddenly brought upon him, what about his neighbor, the Catholic priest, who finds his flock discussing the sermons of some eloquent Presbyterian or Baptist divine?

What would the Holy Inquisition have done if it had had the radio to oppose? It burned heretical books, and it burned heretics, but they could be readily located and apprehended. Even Torquemada might have thrown up his hands had he known that nature had provided subtle means by which a preacher in Brooklyn might broadcast the gospel so that every man, woman and child betweeen the two oceans might listen in.

Books which are thought to be perversive of the faith can be placed in the "Index Expurgatorius," a list which includes some of the noblest works of the human intellect. Is the same method to be applied to communications by wireless? It looks so. We need not be surprised to read in Saturday's paper a note opposite Sunday items in the programs of WEAF, or WJZ, to the effect that "good Catholics must tune this out." For the "Observer" of Pittsburgh, Pa., which can usually be depended upon to reflect truly the opinion of influential Catholics, recently published the following question and answer: "Query: Is there any harm for a Catholic in his own home follow-

ing through the radio service conducted in a Protestant church?—Interested."

"Answer: There certainly is harm, and it is difficult to see that the practice is defensible. We are not permitted to take part in heretical services. One might, indeed, argue that listening on the radio does not constitute presence at those services, but for all practical purposes and intents, one is vitally, though not bodily, present when he listens in on the radio. Moreover, no one is allowed to expose his faith to the danger of being contaminated or lost. Listening in on heretical services may easily constitute such a danger. It is the common teaching of theologians that active, material, public communication in heretical worship is forbidden under pain of grave sin, not only by the law of the church, but by the very law of nature. They assign various reasons; the danger of perversion, the scandal given both to Catholics who may be tempted to do the same thing, and to heretics who may thus be confirmed in their error, the implied approbation of the heretical worship. . . . . Faith is a priceless gift of God, and carries with it a grave responsibility. It may be forfeited, and no one is permitted to expose it to perversion. Listening in on the radio at heretical services, even if one is not bodily present, constitutes such a danger. Only the foolhardy will say that his faith is so strong that it cannot be forfeited. Any gift may be lost, and when the true faith is lost it is not regained."—"Christian Advocate."

EVANGELISM BY THE PRINTED PAGE.

One of the large streams of usefulness flowing from D. L. Moody's consecrated common sense in seizing opportunity, the Bible Institute Colportage Association of Chicago, has recently completed 29 years of service. In this period nearly eight million copies of its special publication, the Colportage Library, have been sold directly and through its staff of colporters and helpers. It is notable that the best sellers the past year have been the English and Spanish editions of Mr. Moody's own book of sermons, "The Way to God."

The Association does a widespread missionary work through several Book Funds, sustained by public contributions and expended in the free grants of book, tracts, Scripture portions, etc., to local Christian workers among needy or neglected people, or those lacking the usual ministrations of the church. These include prisoners in penal institutions, the pioneers in the West, the lumberjacks in the northern woods, miners, seamen, coastguards, and such. All these are reachable by the printed page, and it is surprising and gratifying to see how gifts of Christian literature are welcomed, especially where children are concerned.

The gross receipts of the Association for last year were $132,898, leaving a deficit of $1382. Mr. Moody's original purpose of carrying on this branch of work on a self-supporting basis is still adhered to, prices on all publications being figured close.

We are indebted to the Association for a couple of pictures printed in this issue showing the need and value of gospel literature.

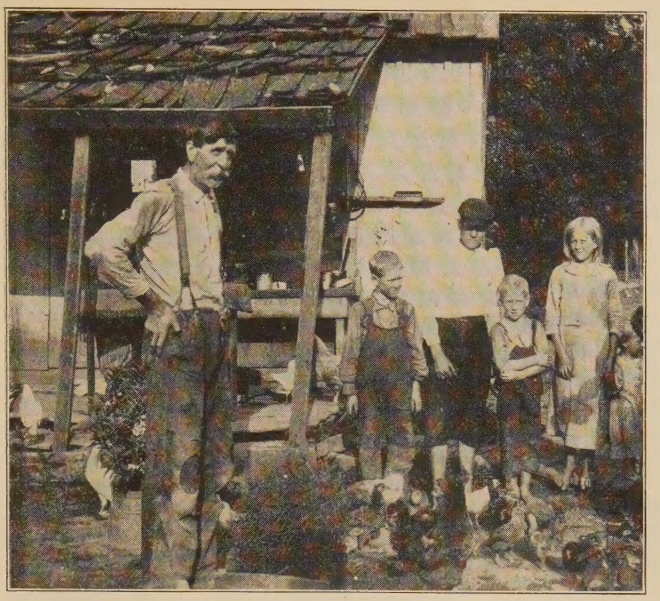
BIBLE SUGGESTIONS.

Three things the Bible requires of us. (1) Careful consideration—the action of the mind. (2) Continual meditation—the action of the heart. (3) Close application—the action of the will.—Dr. Griffith Thomas.

Dr. G. Campbell Morgan once stated that he had **read the Bible from beginning to end** at pulpit rate in sixty hours. A correspondent of the "Church Family Newspaper" made the same experiment, and completed his reading in seventy-six hours which was spread over a period of eighty-one days. He states that if ordinary people devoted half as much time to the Bible as they give to a newspaper they could easily read the Bible through in three months without undue effort. He adds:

"How many Christians are there who have never read the Bible through once? Yet at my slow rate of reading it can be read through comfortably in a year at the rate of fifteen minutes a day."

A hundred years ago Scarborough was just a little fishing village, with thirty or fifty fisher people living there. These people discovered a spring, and this little spring was found to have healing and me-



Since These Older Mountain Children Have Learned to Read They are a Challenge to Some One to Provide Them With Gospel Books and Scripture Portions to Lead Them into the Way of Life

dicinal properties. People began to come to the spring from far and wide to find healing from their pains and weaknesses. When the people began to come, they thought they should make the place more attractive, so they began to build things around the spring. They built what they called the Spa, a long promenade, and then a concert room, then a theater, then a restaurant. They built so many things around that spring that the spring has been forgotten, and I dare say of the hundred thousand people who go to Scarborough now every year not one of every thousand knows the spring exists. The very thing that gave the resort birth has been crowded out. That is to say, the addenda have crowded out the spring.

Here is **the spring of the Word,** the Word of Life, at which nations must drink; and my fear, my anxiety is lest the additions to the modern church shall crowd out the important things. We find gymnasiums, clubs, societies of a hundred kinds, threatening to crowd out the central spring. People are being entertained, but their thirst is not being quenched, and they go away from the churches, and they are thirsty still.—Dr. J. H. Jowett.

If I were asked to quote **the most beautiful short saying in Holy Scripture,** I should hesitate between two,—one in the New Testament and one in the Old. In the Old Testament, my choice would be: "The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms." In the New Testament I should offer 1 John 4. 16, not as translated in the Authorised Version indeed, but as it is translated in Weymouth, and as it always should have been translated: "As for us, we know the love which God has for us, and we confide in it." There you have the substance of all Christian theology, and the substance in the same breath of all Christian ethics. It is a saying compact of thought and philosophy and faith, all cast in a form of beauty so that the very sound of it augments the sense.—Dr. John A. Hutton.

A minister preached on 1 Corinthians 13. 1. The reporter for the daily paper got it right, but the linotype operator, in setting the word "charity," made the mistake of using an "l" instead of an "h," and the proofreader overlooked it. So the minister was reported in the morning paper as having preached from the following text:

"Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not **clarity,** I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal."

Commenting on the story the editor says:

"As it appears in print it was not New Testament truth, but it was truth, never-

theless. The people want the preacher to be luminous rather than voluminous, and the preacher who is without clarity will soon be without a congregation. So, whether we like it or not, such are the conditions which confront us in these busy days with their many duties. And we must either meet the conditions of our own generation, or fail to serve it."

The United Brethren Church and the Bible.

The Board of Administration of the United Brethren Church, in announcing the spiritual aims to be placed before their church for the year 1923-24, includes this as to their attitude toward the Holy Scriptures:

1. We stand uncompromisingly for the Scriptures in their entirety as the Word of God, and not as merely containing the word of God.

2. As such, it should be read daily in the public schools, as a part of the educational program for our youth.

3. As such, it should be read daily at the family altar in all Christian homes, as a safeguard to the home, and as the prolific source of ministerial supply.

4. As the Word of God, the Bible shall be declared plainly and fearlessly from all our pulpits, with due emphasis upon its great fundamental teachings, such as the deity of Jesus Christ, the supernatural character of its record, the person and work of the Holy Spirit, the experience of regeneration and life immortal of the believer. And for that preaching of this Holy Word of God we declare for a ministry clean in morals, spiritually regenerated, doctrinally sound, and personally consecrated.

5. In all matters spiritual the Bible shall be the final authority, and not science, philosophy, or social standards.

Publish the Sermon Text.

EDITOR "THE CHRISTIAN ADVOCATE": SIR: Dr. Gillies' article on "Advertising the Sermon" was very helpful. However, I was not a little surprised that the able preacher did not suggest the immense advertising value of publishing his text. "The word of God is powerful."

I have always published my texts, and find nothing better. Besides their magnificent drawing power, there is a quaintness of phrase, a freshness of statement that none but a genius can approach. Tomorrow, I shall preach from the text, "And why call ye me Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?" My sermon is introduced and half preached by the giving of the text. These words of Jesus have a tone of authority that arrests attention.

How could I make a more attractive theme than is given in the Master's words? "Saying and Not Doing," "Lip Service Only," "Our Deeds Should Equal Our Professions of Love," "Will a Man Get to Heaven by Belief Only?" "The Master Calls for Doers." None of these is half so appealing as the simple words of Jesus.

I ran over the 200 church advertisements in today's "Times." Not once is the name of Jesus found; not a single sentence of his teachings is given. The nearest thing to a Christian theme is this: "The Transforming Power of Christ." This also is the only place where the word "Christ" appears. Yet we wonder why New York churches are thinly attended. "New York is the graveyard of preachers." I wonder if they do not bury themselves by their smart, man-made themes. Here are some of them: "Retrospect and Prospect," "Happy, Though Good," "One More Chance," "A Wireless World," "Illusions of Progress," "Coué, Freak or Friend?"

I called on an old lady once who was deaf and had never heard me preach. She seldom went to church. "You know," she said, "the first thing I look for in Saturday's paper, it is your text. I get so much good from them I look them up, and then wonder what you said." I have found many who tell me the same thing.

J. ELMER CATES.

A WHOLE BIBLE SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON COURSE.

After much prayer and study the following action in the matter of proposed "Fundamentalist" Sunday school lessons was unanimously approved by the World Conference on Christian Fundamentals, at its fifth annual meeting at Fort Worth, Texas:

"We, the members of the Committee on the Sunday School Course of the Christian

Fundamentals Association, beg leave to submit the following report:

"After very careful consideration of all the interests involved, and a conscientious canvass of the entire Sunday school situation, we recommend:

"First, that the proposal of a course a year since at the annual convention in Los Angeles, and later partially wrought out by the Committee, be adopted.

"In presenting this, we offer no criticism of other existing courses, but propose a course for consecutive, comprehensive, and conservative Bible study. And we recognize that this course may properly be used in schools in which other courses also are used in different departments. We commend it as a suitable course for individual study by those who are not connected with a Sunday school.

"While recognizing all legitimate and worthy helps in lesson preparation, we propose the use of the Bible itself as our textbook, and commend to all schools adopting this course the ownership and use of a Bible by each student.

"This course will commence October 1, 1923.

"We recommend that the new course be named 'The Whole-Bible Sunday School Course.'"

The present action of the Christian Fundamentals Association, it is to be noted, does not look toward any attempt to force the new lessons upon any schools, nor does it suggest any criticism of or reflection upon schools that may not adopt them. It recognizes that schools can properly use the new course in certain departments, if they think best, and use the International or other courses in other departments.

The whole plan is all very tentative, and is intended to be simply a friendly offer of help to any Sunday-schools or departments or classes or individuals who would like to follow a course carrying them through the Bible by books, in a more comprehensive way than is ordinarily done, and with a fuller use of the Bible alone and a minimum use of helps. No severance of relationships with the organized Sunday school work, whether of county, state, International or World's, is required or contemplated in this action, any more than that membership in the Christian Fundamentals Association contemplates the severance of one's relationship to one's own evangelical denomination. And it is to be hoped that conservative Christians everywhere, including those who for one reason or another have not seen their way clear to indentify themselves with the Fundamentals Association as such, yet who are soundly "Fundamentalist" in their position, will avail themselves of these new lessons if they find them adapted to their needs.—"Sunday School Times."

OTHER LANDS.

The British and Foreign Bible Society announce that they have been able to secure an admirable site for a new **Bible depot in Jerusalem.** On one side it adjoins the municipal garden in the Jaffa Road, and on another side it faces the Nablus Road. It is within a minute of the General Post Office, in the very heart of the business quarter of Jerusalem.

The full responsibility for the maintenance of **Episcopal mission work among the Indians and Eskimos of the Dominion** has been assumed by the Canadian church. Until recently by far the greater portion of this work was initiated and maintained by the Church Missionary Society of London, without costing churchmen of Canada a single dollar. A little over a year ago the final payment was made by the mother church, which withdrew from the field, and now Canadians must carry on. To this end they have established a capital sum of half a million dollars as an endowment for that particular purpose.

An interesting development in the relations of the Protestant churches of France and of America is found in the lectures which have recently been given at the **theological schools at Strasbourg and Paris** by Professor William Adams Brown of New York. The series of lectures was arranged on the initiative of the Federal Council of the Churches, through its Commission on Relations with France and Belgium, as a means of furthering understanding and coöperation.

The lectures which Professor Brown has delivered have dealt chiefly with the present state of religion and the church in this

country. He has been received with especial enthusiasm because of his services as secretary of the General War Time Commission of the churches during the war.

The painful internal dissension which rent the **Church Missionary Society** a year ago has been closed, so far as the C. M. S. is concerned, by the following manifesto:

"The C. M. S. Committee humbly seek the divine forgiveness for any share of responsibility they may have had in connexion with the whole controversy, and they take this opportunity of making it known that they for their part are determined to close it, so that their energies may no longer be diverted from the enthusiastic prosecution of their proper work of proclaiming the eternal gospel. They have no hope that further discussion in committees will throw more light on such theological problems as have been distracting them during the last few months. They believe that those who have doubted God's acceptance of the work of the Society and the reality of his blessing upon it will be convinced, not by further argument, but by the manifestation of the fruit of the Spirit, and by the demonstration of his operation through signs following. This being so, the Committee of the C. M. S. are determined henceforth to concentrate all their thought and prayers and energy upon the work of world evangelization and at the same time they call all the members of their great constituency throughout the world to a new dedication of their lives to the same object. They believe that in the further and more intense prosecution of this work God will clear away any misunderstandings and misconceptions that remain, and that he will show more and more light upon all their problems at home and abroad in response to a more unreserved trust in him and his revealed truth, a more wholehearted resting upon him, and a more fearless utilization of his power in the work he has entrusted to them.

"Therefore, while sincerely deploring all past failure, the Committee definitely issue this call to the Society as a whole, to forget the things that are behind and to press on toward the goal unto the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. All over the world there is a spirit of expectation among Christian people of all denominations. In the words of a well-known preacher of revival, 'The day is swiftly drawing near when men shall sink their differences, and shall come together to a place called Calvary, and there repent of their foolishness of the days gone by, and looking up into the face of God's Anointed, shall say, Thy kingdom come!'

"In this spirit, and believing that God is waiting to do great things for them and for their brethren, the Committee call upon the whole Society to resort to prayer for such a revival of religion at home and abroad as will sweep away misunderstanding and dissension, will create a deeper love for and a truer understanding of God's Word, and will unite the whole church of Christ in a great forward movement, an increased ingathering of souls all the world over, and a fresh and obvious demonstration of the Spirit and of power."

An Italian, who was half intoxicated and unconscious of where he was going, stumbled into a Salvation Army meeting in Turin. He remembers only one thing of what he heard and saw. The hymns, the prayers, the sermon, left no impression upon his mind, but as he entered a verse from the Bible, read by the Army officer, struck to his conscience: "Let us walk honestly as in the day, not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness."

It was the very passage that flooded St. Augustine's soul with light after hearing the voice: "Tolle, lege! Take up and read!"

Today this Italian is selling the Scriptures for the British and Foreign Bible Society. At first he shrank from reappearing in the haunts of his unregenerate days. "But in this piazza," he then said to himself, "I served the devil, and was not ashamed to be drunk and to blaspheme in the hearing of men. I will not be less courageous in the Lord's service."

Last year he sold 6000 volumes, including 400 complete Bibles.

A Helpful Movement in Bulgaria.

The recent opening of the Y. M. C. A. Vocational School in Sofia, Bulgaria, was made the occasion of a remarkable gathering, in which clergy of the Bulgarian and

Luncheon Accommodations for Day Visitors at the Northfield Conferences.

Russian Orthodox churches joined with representatives of the Bulgarian government, and with American and English residents, in exercises recognizing the importance of a new enterprize in trade instruction for refugees.

Among those present were officers high in command in the Bulgarian army, the minister of Education, president of the Chamber of Commerce, the private secretary and minister plenipotentiary of King Boris, and representatives of all government departments, Ambassador Wilson of the United States, Lord and Lady Colvin of the Reparations Commission, the president and secretary of the Bulgarian National Y. M. C. A., the secretary of the Y. W. C. A., and the head of the American schools in Bulgaria. Such a comprehensive audience probably never met in Bulgaria before.

Even more significant were the 330 students, mostly young men from the army and expatriates of that old Russia which for three years stood the brunt of the war for the Allies on the eastern front.

The school dormitory has fifty-two rooms, with berths fitted in ship-cabin style, and a restaurant.

The school is being carefully studied by Bulgarians who are interested in organizing a general system of vocational training for the young men of the country. A representative of this group—an army officer,—says that the need of Bulgaria is not a large army to fight, but trained men to work, who would increase the country's productive power. Leading newspapers of Sofia have expressed appreciation of the spirit the Americans have shown in establishing the school.

American Baptists in Rome.

The American Baptist Mission has considerably enlarged and intensified its work in Italy of late, according to a report of Dr. D. G. Whittinghill. Owing to the retirement of the English Baptist Society, which has labored in Italy for fifty years, their pastors and church property have been taken over by the Foreign Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention. In this transfer the board received two English missionaries, twelve native pastors, eight chapels, and a lot for building purposes. The United Mission has at present forty-nine churches, about 100 outstations, fifty pastors, a beautiful orphanage building on Monte Mario near Rome, a theological school (temporarily closed), and four periodical publications, two of which are monthly magazines. "Our evangelical publication work is by far the best in Italy, and exercises considerable influence not only among evangelicals, but also among a large class of outside intellectuals.

"Rome itself has become our Baptist

center. We have four church buildings and a rented hall where the gospel is preached on Sundays and during the week. Our weekly newspaper, 'Conscientia,' for the outside public has a large circulation throughout Italy. In Rome alone there are nearly 100 dealers who keep the paper on sale. Our monthly review, 'Bilychnis,' has among its contributors a number of members of Parliament and several in the Senate, besides a goodly number of professors in the universities, lyceums and gymnasiums. Our readers are to be found in every country in Europe except Russia, and we have many subscribers in North America.

"As soon as we can find money to erect the necessary buildings in Piazza Barberini for our headquarters, we shall be well equipped for progressive work in this great city. We already have in Rome more preaching places than any other two Protestant bodies. Our orphanage property on Monte Mario is as extensive and far more beautiful than that owned by the Methodists. We hope it may in time become the center of a great work in that suburb of the city."

CURRENT THOUGHT.

"Strange," said Dr. D. W. Torrance of Tiberias, "that no mention is made in the Gospels of the **great heat** in which Christ carried on his work."

The Christian ministry makes **the biggest demand on character** of any calling. Its only capital is character. Business men are judged by their goods,—which are the least part of you, gentlemen. We ministers may be as brilliant as possible, and as eloquent as possible, yet unless we can command respect by our personal character we are the most miserable folk in the world.

There are and there have always been **good Jews.** They have bitten deep into the history of the world. What a wonderful contribution they have made to thought, culture, and life! And all that is as nothing to the great contribution they have made to religion. We must not forget, as Dr. Gore has aptly reminded us, that the religion of the Jews was the effective source of faith in a divine purpose running through history and destined to final victory in spite of all failure by the way.—Rev. J. M. Richardson.

I was interested to come across a sentence or two concerning Principal Arnold of Rugby in England, who even after 40 years of teaching in that institution was still spending much time in the preparation of his lessons.

When some one said to him, "Is it necessary for you to spend so much time in preparing the lessons that you have taught so many years?" he replied:

"I want my students to **drink from a running stream, and not from a stagnant pool.**"—Rev. John J. Banninga.

There are **two kinds of sermons that are bad.** There is the sermon that has nothing of the preacher's personality in it, and there is the sermon that has nothing else. Without the preacher's personality, which gives life, the sermon will be a failure. But there must be something in the sermon for his personality to work on. If present-day preaching is as insipid and ineffectual as it is said to be, it is due more to the thinness of the thought and the weakness of the wording than to the absence of the preacher's personality.—Dr. James Hastings.

Dr. John R. Mott gives what he calls a working definition of the quality of **"vision,"** which he regards as a distinguishing characteristic of all really great men. It is the capacity, he says (1) to see what others do not see, (2) to see further than they see, and (3) to see before they see. In his opinion the third part of the definition is fully as important as the other two. A man, hampered by education or opportunity, may be able to see only a few inches beyond others, but if he trains himself to keep looking, and can manage to see those few inches twenty-four hours ahead of the crowd, that is all the advantage he needs.

Dr. Mott instances D. L. Moody as a man who possessed all these three sorts of vision in an exceptional degree. He had, in particular, a wonderful power of looking into men and seeing possibilities which the world had not discovered, and of which even the men themselves were often unconscious.

The Historic Christ.

It is demonstrable, scientifically demonstrable, that we go forward in all that makes for the well-being of man most securely and swiftly as we go back to the historic Christ; to his actual teaching, and away from the numberless accretions that have gathered round and clouded it; to his "mind," cleared of all that has been permitted to overlay it from the paganisms of the past, and the corrupting selfishness of the present; to the facts of his life and death, his resurrection and ascension; to his spirit and work in those early years, which, in their intellectual and spiritual contents, still supply us with the norm of Christian thought, the standard of Christian practice, and the ideal of Christian life. I began there in my youth, and I am there still, with a more steadfast soul, a more assured conviction, and a more invincible hope. I know whom I have believed, and am fully persuaded that the Christ of the past centuries will be the Christ of the coming age. It is he, the Christ of "yesterday," of Galilee and Jerusalem, of Calvary and Olivet, who lives, and leads, and rules today. The cross, as Shelley says, still leads the generations on, yes, and will lead them on till he sees of the travail of his soul, and is satisfied!—Dr. John Clifford.

Killed by the Preliminaries.

Dr. Charles M. Sheldon finds himself often on a Sunday in a church facing an "Order of Service" which he has come to dread on account of its "Preliminaries."

As, for example, an average church service arranged as follows:

Organ Prelude. Doxology. Invocation. Response. Solo. Responsive Reading. Anthem. Hymn. Duet. Scripture. Prayer. Response. Second Anthem. Notices. (Solo) Offering. Offertory Prayer. Gloria. Hymn. Sermon. Hymn. Benediction. Organ Postlude.

Looking over this "Order of Service" Dr. Sheldon rather anxiously begins to count the minutes absorbed by the "preliminaries." The hour hand of the clock on the front of the gallery facing the pulpit moves around to eleven-fifty before the item of the "Sermon" is reached. And as he rises to give his message he realizes that he is facing a tired audience, breathing bad air, in poor condition of mind or body to receive inspiration.

This is not an unreasonable or egotistic demand for the putting forward of the sermon. There is a fitting place for the organ and the choir and the rest of the Order of Service. But a great many speakers are being submerged by "Orders of Service." The Sermon is away at the bottom of the long list of "Responses" and "Solos" and "Organ" and "Notices."

If no other epitaph is handy when the editor of the "Christian Herald" dies, please write this on his tombstone. It sometimes seems as if it might be appropriate, and more or less (like all epitaphs) true:

"Here lies the man who thought he had a sermon to preach. He longed to preach it, but he was killed by the 'Preliminaries!' "—"Christian Herald."

"My Jesus, I Love Thee!"

Frederick M. Steele.

Where is the earnest man or woman whose heart in times of great religious emotion has not been thrilled when singing that fine hymn of consecration beginning:

"My Jesus, I love thee!
I know thou art mine!"

The hymn has been in use the world over nearly since the time of its first publication in the "London Hymn Book" in the year 1862.

The name of the author has never been given, for its inception has been unknown up to a recent period. Therefore, in lieu of the writer's name the source from which it was taken has been given. For nearly 60 years the Christian world has been indebted to a gifted and consecrated young man for this heart expression of his love to his newly found Redeemer, without knowing who that person was, or where he lived.

This information has recently come to light. The authorship is American, and adds laurels to American hymnody.

The hymn was written in 1858 by William Ralph Featherstone, a Canadian youth, at the age of 16. He died ten years later.

Can we be too thankful to those who have put their own most sacred aspirations and experiences into words which are the means of uplift and benefit to their fellow men?

THE MISSION FIELD.

Figures recently published in a Catholic paper in Rome indicate that about 76,000 adult Chinese were converted to the Roman Catholic faith last year. There are now more than **two million Chinese Catholics,** it is claimed.

Dr. S. M. Zwemer, after a new survey of the **Moslem world population,** says there are 204,429 Moslems in North and South America, 17,769,957 in Europe, 154,678,909 in Asia and islands, and 60,948,397 in Africa,—a total of 233,601,692.

A speaker in a zenana, telling the story of the Prodigal Son, had just depicted the boy coming home a beggar, and as having lost simply everything,—then the father met him with open arms.

"Oh," said a little Brahman woman, "the **portion of love remained!"**

The Presbyterian Board of Foreign Missions employs two "**dentists at large"** in China. "These scientific missionaries have been appointed to serve the 5000 missionaries and members of their families. They will travel from station to station to serve the missionaries' needs. It is thought that this provision for the health of the workers will result in many staying on the field who might otherwise be compelled to leave for the homeland because of illness due to dental trouble."

Preliminary statistical reports at the headquarters of the American Baptist Foreign Mission Society show that on the ten mission fields last year 17,141 converts were baptized on their confession of faith in Jesus Christ. This is **the highest total in the 109 years of organized missionary effort** on the part of Northern Baptists.

Reports from the European fields indicate 10,118 baptisms, many of which were undoubtedly the results of preaching tours of the fraternal messengers sent to Europe by the Board of Managers last summer. This makes a total of 27,259 on both European and non-Christian fields.

"The Drum Call" of the West Africa Presbyterian mission asks this pregnant question: **Shall pagans** be converted to Christianity today by the hundred, or Mohammedans converted tomorrow one by one?

Rev. E. M. Cable, D. D., writes in the "Korea Mission Field" of **a great awakening** among the students of the Union Methodist Theological Seminary during four days last February.

Two native pastors were asked to lead the meetings, which, however, partook largely of prayer and confession, as the Spirit of God was poured out in gracious measure.

The revival nearly broke up the seminary, as the students felt they must go home at once to right wrongs and testify of their blessing.

In February 1921 a preacher of the Korea Southern Methodist mission entered **Siberia,** whither many Koreans have migrated. A year later Siberia reported 80 churches, and 3208 believers. The report now claims over a hundred groups, over 3500 enrolled believers, 28 pastors, two colporters, six Bible women, and one foreign missionary.

The Koreans carry the budget for about a quarter of this work, and the Board at Nashville the rest. But the Koreans show a fine spirit of independence, and the district superintendents are Koreans.

A by-product of the success among Koreans is that Russians, the great majority of whom have realized the collapse of the state church, but who are incurably religious, have noted the Korean Christians, and studied the work, so that there is already a thriving Russian congregation.

Writing in "The Chinese Recorder" upon the work of **twenty years in an up-country mission station** in South East Chihli, Rev. Arnold G. Bryson traces the lack of greater results to three chief causes: the baneful influence of the Boxer indemnity paid by the Chinese government to those Christians and their dependents who received compensation in 1900, inducing a mercenary spirit; the dependence of converts upon mission-paid pastors, with consequent lack of a sense of responsibility; and the check upon spiritual growth owing to illiteracy.

For ten years past the mission policy has

been to keep the evangelistic staff as a mobile force whose task is to evangelize the district as a whole, while village Christian communities are expected to provide and maintain their own places for public worship. Ability to read is made a requisite for church membership, so that in these village churches there are always some who can read the Scriptures, and through prayer and fellowship lead the churches to look to God rather than to each other or to the mission. Local leaders are nurtured in winter classes at special points. The results seem to justify the policy.

THE NORTHFIELD OF BURMA.

Miss Clara E. Barrows.

As the Northfield Conferences each year are of great help and inspiration to all those who attend, so the Maymyo Bible Assembly of Burma is proving to be to the young people in this country.

Maymyo was a busy place during the ten days from March 30 to April 9, but they were wonderful days, filled to overflowing with good things. On the evening of March 30 about 125 delegates from all over Burma gathered together for the opening service of the Assembly. As they entered the church the motto of the Assembly stood out before them over the platform with the words, "The Life that Conquers is the Life in Christ." A good lively song service put all in readiness for the opening address by Dr. McCurdy on "The Need for Lives that Conquer." This indeed made all feel that the only life worth while, and the only one by which others will be brought into the kingdom of God, is this life in Christ. It put upon each one, also, a responsibility when he realized that the days at Maymyo were days of privilege for power.

On Saturday morning the classes began in full swing, and the following schedule will give a little idea of how full the days were. At six in the morning those who were still sleeping were roused from their slumbers by the call of a bugle, which brought all out for setting up exercises. At 7.30 came the morning prayer service, which proved to be the finest service of the day, and prepared the minds and hearts of the delegates for all that should come during the day. At the close of that service the order was given, "To your classes!" and from 8.30 until 10.30 all were busily taking notes in Old Testament and New Testament classes, which were given in English, Burmese and Karen. After breakfast, from 11.30 until 2.30 the delegates were able to specialize somewhat, and attend the various conferences which would help them most in their particular work. There were conferences on Sunday school work, church methods, boy and girl leadership, young people's work, and women's work. These were all well attended, and at the rate notebooks were filled we feel sure that many who could not come this year will be benefited by the full reports of those who had the privilege of hearing so many good and helpful things.

After tiffin at 2.30 the time was free for all sorts of sports and games, such as football, volley ball, tennis, and badminton. These were entered into heartily and all seemed to thoroughly enjoy the time spent thus.

At 7 came the platform meetings, when the speakers all grouped their thoughts around the general theme, "The Conquering Life," and stirred their hearers to a determination to realize it in their own lives. There was much singing, especially of the Assembly hymn, "Living for Jesus," and special music was furnished each night. A very impressive service was held one night when the need for a worker for the Hsipaw field was given, and then was told how after much prayer some one was found who would carry on that work for the coming year. A stirring appeal had been made some months before, and it seemed very fitting that the young man and his wife who had responded to the call should be there at the Assembly that night on their way to the work to which God had called them. As they stood together on the platform after he had told of God's call and their happiness in going to this field, Dr. McCurdy offered a prayer of consecration, dedicating these two to the service of God. Many of the delegates were deeply impressed by this service, and who can tell but that it may be the means of leading others to answer the call of God to some definite Christian work?

There was a strong religious and spiritual atmosphere all through the meetings,

but there was also plenty of fun and good times. There were two special trips, one to Anisakan and one to Goteik gorge. For both of these trips special cars were used, and the cheers and songs rang out as they would from a group in America. Then there was an afternoon given over to sports, and the whole crowd was divided into two sides, and the competition for the greatest number of points was high. That same night there was a concert, when nearly all contributed a number or some sort of stunt to the evening's entertainment. The concert closed with a sing, which finally led to the singing of favorite hymns.

Surely these ten days were days of power and inspiration, and no one can tell how far the influence of those days will go. From the north of Burma to the very southern part, from the eastern coast to the hills on the west, there will ring out all during this year the Assembly hymn and songs, and the delegates will spread forth the advice, help, and inspiration which they were privileged to receive.

We would ask the Northfield delegates this year, and those who know what it is to receive the inspiration of such meetings, to remember these people in prayer, that they may be kept true to the high resolves that they made, and that the vision of service for the Master may be always before them.

A LAND OF LAY PREACHERS.

Rev. Robert Griffith.

The church in Madagascar is in many ways a mixture of Presbyterianism, Methodism and Congregationalism. First of all we have the evangelist, who has nearly always had college training; he has charge of from six to nine churches, sometimes more. Then we have in each church a "Mpitandrina," which technically means "Pastor," but the literal translation is "One who looks after," and that, until recently, just expresses the position of an ordinary pastor in a country church in Madagascar. He was unpaid. Usually he was the richest man in the village, and was chosen pastor because of his character and ability to entertain.

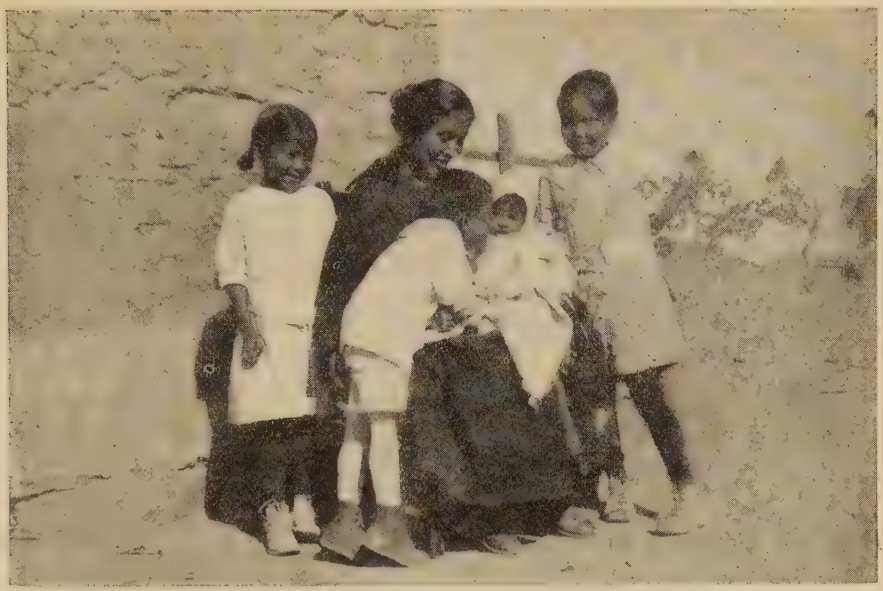
The evangelist and the old-fashioned pastor are rapidly disappearing. The churches are beginning to call for college-trained men, and they are using the name "Pasteur" and abandoning the old term "Mpitandrina."

The "pasteur" is supported by the church, and is expected to give all his time to the work of the church. He does not, however, preach every Sunday in his own church; it is here that the Malagasy church has taken a leaf from the pages of the Methodist community. There are lay preachers who go from place to place in the district to preach every Sunday according to plan. These also have to be trained for that purpose, and Bible schools are held in various centers, where a two or three years' course is given to the lay preacher. These Biblical schools are conducted by the missionary in charge of the district, and they have been very helpful in providing "mpitandrina" for the smaller country churches, and are also a training school for aspirants to the Theological College.

From the time of the re-opening of the mission in 1863, the work in Madagascar has been virtually a mass movement, and it has been necessary to employ a large army of helpers to cope with the situation; hence the growth of the lay preachers' movement, which has done such excellent service for nearly fifty years.

A special feature of the United Theological College in Tananarive is the training for Sunday school work. I do not know that there is a theological college anywhere in England which pays as much attention to work among young people and children as the United Theological College in Tananarive. The result is that the students go out from that college with a very fair idea of how to present the Bible and its teaching to children and young people, and this accounts very largely for the great development of the work among young people during the past ten years. This has resulted in the desire for the best and most modern methods of training Sunday school teachers, who will be responsible for the work among children and young people.

Through the generosity of the World's Sunday School Association and the farseeing vision of the Sunday School Union of Madagascar, Ramambasoa, a former student of the United Theological College of Tananarive, was sent to England for



This Pleasing Picture from "The Red Man in the United States" (See Our Book Table) Represents a Navajo Family. The Mother is an Interpreter at the Mission Hospital at Ganada, Arizona, and was Educated at the Mission School.

special training at Westhill. He took the full two years' course and gained the Westhill diploma, and has now returned to Madagascar to form centers for the training of Sunday school teachers and workers among young people.

So the training of church workers in Madagascar consists of work done by the theological colleges in five different centers; a number of Bible schools, conducted by missionaries in the various districts; the new movement for the training of Sunday school teachers, on lines which are modern and yet suitable to the genius of the Malagasy people.—"Chronicle."

PROMISE IN THE PHILIPPINES.

Rev. Frank C. Lauback, a Congregational missionary in the Philippines, writes with great enthusiasm of recent happenings and the promise of greater things.

"A meeting was held recently of representatives of nearly all the Mission Boards, to lay plans for a United Christian Church of the Philippines. It is to be Congregational in government, and to ignore entirely the question of doctrine. The meeting voted unanimously to submit this to the churches for their consideration. I predict that a United Christian Church of the Philippines will be a reality within one or two years.

"At the Conference, which just closed, consisting of representative students from all the Islands, the greatest Filipino Christian leaders in the Islands met and solemnly decided to establish a United Christian Filipino Church, if the missionaries did not beat them to it. Because of my own enthusiasm for church union and for trained Filipino leadership I was the one missionary invited to that meeting. Many other missionaries feel exactly as I do and as the Filipinos do, that denominationalism is a curse and a handicap, and must be swept away, but they are not quite so free to make their feelings known as I have been. The most astounding fact about this meeting was that Roman Catholics demand that this united Filipino church shall include them. Not, of course, as a denomination. They are perfectly clear that the Roman Catholic organization will never unite with the rest of us, but there are thousands upon thousands of nominal Roman Catholics who will never come into any Protestant denomination, but who will

instantly join a union movement of this kind. And so something is going to happen within the next few months in this line, and the only question is whether the missionaries will be in it.

"Great things have happened for Christ in Manila during the past few months. We took a survey of the students of Manila to discover their addresses. There are seventy thousand students, or one-fourth of the population. We then held evangelistic meetings in the various churches of the city, inviting the students to come, and had several hundred decision cards signed. At the close of this campaign we held a mass meeting, and had seven thousand present, packing the largest theater and the largest church in the city of Manila. After this we had ninety-two Bible classes in various parts of the city in a three-months' course. Our only trouble was the lack of good teachers.

"The profound need of the Philippine Islands is a spiritual and educated Christian leadership. We have student volunteer bands in about eight places, and hope to extend them to every province of the Islands. These students volunteer to be either home or foreign missionaries.

"We have made up our minds here in the Philippines to make of these Islands a Christian model in the great continent of Asia, and every Filipino student responds with his whole heart to the challenge. You may expect great things within the next few months. Keep your eye on the Philippine Islands! Just this week, in two different meetings, more than six hundred students arose and declared their allegiance to the cause of Christ in the Philippines."

TROPHIES OF GRACE.

A rug manufacturer in Peking was converted. With fear and trembling he decided to shut his factory on Sundays, though it was necessary for him to pay his boys the regular weekly salary whether they worked or not. Then he found these young boy apprentices were very restless on Sundays, and needed some occupation, so at his own expense he engaged a teacher for them, since he was not well enough educated himself, and has Bible classes on Sunday, incidentally teaching them all to read and write. This is the more benevolent when one realizes that these boys would otherwise have been beggars on the streets. Of the latter, too, there are an enormous number, and all in terrible condition.

Miss Gowans asked the man to report to her after a year, how his experiment in faith came out. At the end of the year he came delightedly to say that he had never before been so prosperous. He had never before been out of debt. He now owns his own buildings, is now out of debt, and has money in the bank, so much has God prospered him. Miss Gowans heard in a round-about way how at least a part of it was accomplished. This conversation was overheard on a train, and was reported to her without the eavesdropper knowing her connection with the subject of the discussion. One rug buyer, either British or American, was talking to another. Said he:

"I ran across a queer thing a couple of weeks ago. I went to see that rugmaker Sun. It happened to be on Sunday morning, and I found the place locked up. I went around to the back, where there was some noise, and if you will believe it, the whole bunch was singing 'Nearer, My God, to Thee.' With a reasonable amount of respect I waited till they would finish, but no sooner were they through with that than they started in on 'Jesus Loves Me.' I thought that was a bit thick, so I called for Sun. He came out, and very politely told me that he would not talk business on the sabbath. You could have knocked me over with a feather! He, a maker, was telling me, a buyer, to come around on Monday! Can you beat that? And I was just that curious I DID go around Monday, and went through the plant. But, if you please, I had to wait again on Monday morning till they had finished morning prayers!! That factory is the cleanest and finest in Peking, and their rugs are quite equal to, if not better than the others. I took his entire output for the year!"—Rev. Ross E. Stoddard.

I want to tell you a moving story about a man who received his education with me in a Christian college.

He was married when he was only a boy, and when he was about twenty years of age

he went to fetch his wife. The wife saw that he frequently went into his own room alone to do something, but what it was she did not know. She always expected her husband to take his part in the religious rites of the Hindus, but he never did so. The wife began to suspect that in his room there must be a photograph of some other woman,—I suppose it is a womanly feeling to suspect a thing of that sort.

One day when the man had gone to work she went in and found a small box. She opened it, and found a copy of the New Testament. She had always thought that Christians were a bad lot, and she would not have anything to do with them, and did not want her people to have anything to do with them; but she began to read the New Testament. When she began to read about the Saviour, somehow or other her heart was softened, and **one day the Saviour revealed himself to her.**

The result was that when her husband returned from work in the evening she said to him: "It is all right! I shall make amends for the past. I shall love you for the sake of Jesus. I have seen the Book!" —Rev. Joel Waiz Lall.

The Honorable Succession of Paul and Silas.

In a prison cell certain men under sentence of death heard the gospel of Jesus from the lips of a fellow prisoner.

The unofficial "chaplain" had been chief assistant-master in the Middle School attached to the Presbyterian Church of England mission at Wukingfu. Later he had found his niche as a lexicographer, and proved of great value to our missionary, Mr. Mackenzie, in his task of producing a new edition of the Hakka Dictionary, now awaiting publication. It was while he was engaged on this work that the man was suddenly seized by the military officer at Swatow as a hostage for the good behavior of his native village. This was a most unwarrantable course, but the country is in the travail of civil war, and harassed everywhere by brigandage, and legalities are often thrown to the winds. The friends of the imprisoned man sometimes despaired of his ever regaining freedom.

During the time of his captivity he had much leisure to think deeply upon the matters of faith and religion which he had learnt in the mission. One night he dreamed that an old friend had come to visit him from the unseen world. His visitor quoted to him the words of the Laodicean curse touching lukewarmness. Thereafter stone walls did not a prison make: they made rather a place of opportunity and a vantage ground for passing on Christ's message to his fellow prisoners.

Among these were men under sentence of death, and as the silence rule was not enforced, he had unhindered scope for his evangelizing. These men, who had nothing in life to look forward to except a firing-party, found new joy and peace in his message.

Their gratitude to the man who had brought this quietude in death took strange forms, for in a prison cell practical ways of conveying thanks are severely limited. It happened that mosquitoes were proving a pest to all the prisoners, and so these men would in turn remain awake, and while their benefactor slept, would keep him unmolested.

At length the man was given his freedom, and—needless to tell—was in great demand among the vacant congregations. He is now happily settled as pastor to the congregation at Hopo, in the neighborhood of Wukingfu. His name is Vong Shen Ngok. Maybe we shall hear more of him!

A Prayer for Missionaries.

O Blessed Jesu, the Saviour of all who put their trust in thee, fulfil thy gracious promise and be with thy servants who have gone forth in thy name to be witnesses of thy love in distant lands! Be with them in all their difficulties, in weariness and discouragement, in troubles and anxieties! Sustain them by the assurance of thy presence, and enable them cheerfully to bear the cross after thee; and grant that those amongst whom thou hast called them to labor may be to them at last their joy and crown of rejoicing! Amen.

QUESTIONS MEN PUT TO JESUS CHRIST.

II. WHAT IS TRUTH?

Rev. W. Y. Fullerton.

This was Pilate's question: it is also mine. But in my case it has not Pilate's scornful emphasis. To him at length on that morning of trial Jesus appeared to be a visionary, speaking of something that had no existence, or if it existed was only the sport of practical men. "I am come to bear witness to the truth," this Prophet of Galilee had said, and Pilate, spurning such fantasy, exclaimed: "WHAT is truth?" He did not trouble to wait for the answer, for he did not believe there was any answer, and if answer was possible he did not want to hear it. He would not pursue shadows,—in effect he said, "A fig for truth! Let us get on with the business of the hour," and turning on his heel, out he went again to bargain with the Jews for the life of Jesus. Had he but been in earnest he would have learnt that he was nearer the answer at that moment than at any time in his career, and he would have bargained with Jesus for his own life.

> But what is truth? 'Twas Pilate's question put
> To Truth itself, that deigned him no reply.

So says Cowper. Yet our Lord might even have given reply to Pilate if Pilate had only waited for it. But Pilate did not care.

Anatole France imagines that in the after years, when he was at Baiæ, one who had heard of Jesus, and of Pilate's share in his crucifixion, asked him about it, and Pilate, after thinking awhile, answered:

"Jesus? Jesus? I do not remember."

It was all to him as nothing.

But to others it has been everything.

"I design to search after truth," said Bishop Butler, "as the business of my life." And Jansen, the leader of the Jansenites, as he walked alone in the garden of the monastery, was often heard to exclaim, "O veritas!" while in recent years the physician who had given his name to the rest cure declared that the fourteenth chapter of the Gospel according to John was his favorite chapter. His reason was not, as with most of us, because it speaks of the "many mansions," but because it told him that the Spirit of God is the Spirit of truth. Therefore wherever we find truth we are not far from God. Every segment of truth must of necessity fit into the great circle. When our Lord came to earth to reveal God he came "full of grace AND TRUTH," and when we seek to reach to God we "must worship him in spirit and IN TRUTH."

For truth is spiritual. "As the soul is clothed in flesh, and only thus is able to perform its functions on the earth, where it is sent to live: as the thought must find a word before it can pass from mind to mind: so every great truth seeks some body, some outward form, in which to exhibit its powers," says Froude. And again, "In the records of all human affairs it cannot be too often insisted on that two kinds of truth run ever side by side, or rather crossing in and out with each other, form the warp and woof of the colored web we call history: the one, the literal and eternal truths corresponding to the eternal and as yet undiscovered laws of fact; the other, the truths of feeling and thought sometimes moulding and shaping history."

Facts, then, are only part of truth. To speak "the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth" in a court of law can only mean the truth about a particular incident, and only the truth as far as it is known to the witness. He may not know how the incident fits into the rest of the life, or the life into other lives, and all lives into the plan of God. Behind all the truths of life there is the truth—one great harmonizing, reconciling truth, if we could but get to know it.

They tell us today that all material things are just different forms of motion, that all the elements are but varying forms of electricity. May we not say that all spiritual things are just different manifestations of truth?

This leads us to him who because he is the truth is also the way and the life. In him truth is embodied and manifested. So

evidently manifested that Paul tells the Ephesians that they have learned Christ "as the truth is in Jesus," not "the truth as it is in Jesus," as the text is generally quoted, as if that was only one phase of the truth, but "as truth is in Jesus." We build on the facts of his life that was really lived, his death that was actually suffered, his resurrection that was certainly accomplished, but the truth is greater than the fact, the Saviour greater than the salvation. When Christ rose from the dead, truth sprang out of the earth, and righteousness looked down from heaven, in a way the writer of the eighty-fifth Psalm never imagined.

This is the truth which, if we know it, sets us free: this the truth that holds us fast. "No pleasure on earth," says Lord Bacon, "is comparable to standing on the vantage ground of truth," and no vantage ground is comparable to Calvary and the garden that surrounds it.

That was a grand scene when Latimer in his old age confronted his persecutors, and to their challenge replied that when he was young and in full possession of his faculties he had found the truth. "And now, an old man, worn by my sufferings, deprived of my books, and excluded from my friends, I am not going to damage the cause of truth by entering into an unequal contest with adversaries in possession of all the advantages which once were mine, but now are denied me. I examined, I studied, I prayed, I was convinced," he said: "for my convictions I am not prepared to argue, but I am quite ready to die."

So it comes to pass that the Spirit of truth may be in us too. Our Lord said that the "father of lies abode not in the truth, because there's no truth in him"; the beloved Gaius, by contrast, is praised in John's third epistle because of "the truth that is in thee, even as thou walkest in the truth." Truth is our life and our element, it becomes part of our very selves, as the bones of a creature that eats madder become red. And the words of truth breathed from the lips of love may commend to the world the faith we profess.

"Well, my young friend," said Cæsar Malan to young Morrison, who was often helped in remembering the words, "see that you hold up the lamp of truth to let the people see! Hold it up, hold it up, and trim it well! But remember this; you must not dash the lamp in people's faces. That would not help them to see."

For we may be sure that all truth as it shall be revealed to us will be entirely reasonable.

The Net-Mender.

The God of all grace shall mend your nets.
1 Peter 5. 10.

"The God of grace your nets shall mend."
Christ's master mariner, who fished
Blue Galilee, and knew to ply
His needle on his damaged gear,
The captain of Capernaum,
Did speak this brave and cheering word
That smacks of sail and wind and sea,
And knew it true.

Thou Mender of the broken life,
Repair the rents that we have made,
And so become unusable!
Enmesh again the ravelings of
Our tattered wills, and knot secure
With twine of lasting love the rents
Our wilful ways have made! Then set
Us, Lord, in life's broad stream once more,
Save anchored where we best may serve!

Frank L. Duley.

What Is Mysticism? by Charles M. Addison. Macmillan Co., New York. 34 pages. 75 cents.

One of the "Little Books on Religion." Within its few pages the author presents a remarkably complete study of mysticism. Of course the scope of the book does not permit either a history of mysticism or an analysis of its phenomena, but in a very thorough way mysticism itself is presented to the reader so that he need have no difficulty hereafter in recognizing it.

It appears to us that such a study is timely, for there is a need at present for understanding this thing that has always furnished a vital element in the religious life, while it has also given rise to dangerous extravagances. The present day, in turning on the one hand to rationalism, is likely to overlook and neglect the genuine power and real need of mysticism, and on the other hand, in turning away, as many are, from rationalism to run into the extremes which an unrestrained mysticism makes possible.

The author is genuinely sympathetic, while sane and balanced in his treatment of his subjects.—W. O. S.

CONSCIENCE IN RELATION TO CHRISTIAN FAITH.*

Rev. J. Stuart Holden, D. D.

Now the end of the commandment is charity out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned. 1 Timothy 1. 5.

I will read again, this time from Dr. Moffatt's translation, which casts an interpreting light upon this word, and in which I trust we shall all see something to our profit and good:

"The aim of the Christian discipline is the love that springs from a pure heart, from a good conscience, and from a sincere faith."

This is one of St. Paul's profoundest sayings. It is intended to epitomize for Timothy the divine objective in all the ordered experiences of life, the object of the Christian discipline. Timothy in his office as overseer of the church would be called to interpret life to puzzled and often irritated people, and upon what he could authoritatively declare to them in regard to God might depend their faith, their life, and all the issues of life and faith. Hence Paul is putting into his hands a key to every mysterious and inexplicable thing, as well as of the ordinary ministrations of divine providence. He is putting into his hand a key to the moral meaning of life, so that Timothy may interpret life to those people over whom he is being set as the shepherd. This is what Paul says: God has an ideal for his people, and that ideal is a life of love. To the attainment of that ideal all God's discipline, all his correction, all his guidance, all his enlightenment, all his frustration of their own devices, all that goes to make up that great term, the Christian discipline, is directed.

God has an ideal for his people, and that ideal is a life of love toward himself and toward all men: love which is not a sentimental emotion, love which is not a marsh but a river, a river on whose broad bosom may sail those argosies by which is carried on enriching intercourse between heaven and humanity. Under this figure of the river Paul gives to Timothy that with which Timothy is going to make life understandable and radiant for the people of God.

It is a river with four main tributaries, like that river of which you read in the second chapter of the book of Genesis, which went out from the garden to water the whole earth. Just look at it, the main stream of life: its tributaries are love, a pure heart, a good conscience, a sincere faith. I cannot speak of these four things in detail this morning, but I want to point out to you one most striking conjunction, not accidental or optional, which Paul here emphasizes between faith and conscience,—a good conscience AND a sincere faith. These two are vitally connected and impossible of existence apart. You cannot have a sincere faith without a good conscience, and you cannot have a good conscience apart from a sincere faith. This is the explanation of a good deal of ineffective and unsatisfying Christian faith. So many of God's own people have not recognized this vital connection between what a man holds and what a man is, between his creed and his conduct, between his faith and his conscience. I want therefore to speak to you on that great subject of conscience in relation to Christian faith, and Christian faith in relation to conscience.

Now conscience is a word, which is not very often heard at Bible conferences of this kind. Therefore perhaps it is all the more necessary that at the close of a conference like this the place of conscience in the Christian life should be made as clear as possible to every student.

We are all acquainted with the earlier evangelical insistence upon faith as the one and only necessary human attitude toward God. We have all been brought up in that spirit and instructed in that way.

That little phrase, "by faith" was the sufficient prescription for the soul's great sin malady. It could be healed by faith.

"By faith" was the direction for meeting every difficult situation. "Just meet it by faith," which very often meant nothing more than a mere passive acceptance of fate.

"By faith" was the contradiction of every questioning gesture of the mind as a correction of some evil. "It isn't right to

* Northfield General Conference, August 1922.

question God's way," we were told; "just accept it by faith."

Too often faith was conceived as being the equivalent of active moral goodness, and sometimes more than the equivalent, a positive substitute for active moral goodness, until an entirely false antithesis was set up between faith and works, and in our jealousy to preserve the central place in the whole evangelical system for faith we ceased even to look with any favor upon the suggestion that a man must express his faith by his works, or his faith is entirely dead and valueless.

All this was held and taught despite the very clear, complementary statements of God's Word in regard to faith and conduct. Read again the Epistle of James, whose vigorous language of course admits of no doubt as to faith's true affiliation. For example, you cannot read that epistle without realizing that faith which is not translated into ethical energy is mere credulous self-persuasion; that faith is not a substitute for character, and never can be, but rather the impulse which creates character by obedience to the divine law; that no delusion is more perilous than that which declares that faith can exist in the abstract, that faith can live in vacuo, that faith might still live unembodied in action.

Friends, let us be quite clear about this! A man's faith is not what he holds, but what holds him, and what holds him with a hard helm on the course of duty, on the course of obedience. Your faith is not so much truth that you assent to regarding God and Christ: the last and valid expression of your faith is your character. What you are tests what you believe. You have no more saving faith than is embodied in holy, Christian, obedient, loving, generous life. "If any man have not the spirit of Christ, he is none of his."

Today a good deal is said against modern thought, as though modern thought must be inevitably and essentially wrong and sinful. It is not. Modern thought refuses to identify the God of our Lord Jesus Christ with a deity whose nature could be content with mere mental assent to certain facts and propositions for the proof of which men are entirely without means. Modern thought believes rather that the moral nature of God demands something in the nature of correspondence between himself and those with whom he holds fellowship. The soulless formula, "Only believe," does not satisfy men who do believe, and who find that belief leaves them pretty much where they were in a world of moral realities; and such faith as does that may prove to be little more than fiction.

Now this protest of the modern mind, enlightened, sharpened into acute perceptions by its experience of life, is the protest of a soul which simply cannot subsist on husks. It draws us back to such a word as this, to discover—and I pray we may each discover it,—that there is no moral discrepancy between the divine requirement and our own deepest and highest instinct, and that our demand, that instinctive demand which judges all our insincerity and incompleteness, for something in us which approaches and approximates to God's own nature of reality, is but an echo of God's voice.

The second thing I want to say is this: It is full of intense interest to note the place which is given to conscience in the Word of God. It enables us to come at some understanding of what is the function of conscience.

The Word of God tells of men who were convicted by their own conscience under the influence of the presence and action of Jesus Christ; of others whose conscience bore them witness to the truth. It tells of an apostle who exercised himself that he might always have a conscience void of offence toward God and man. It tells of duties and loyalties, earthward as well as heavenward, which must be fulfilled for conscience' sake. It tells of men whose weak consciences may be defiled by evil and pernicious example. It tells of other men who are supported in the midst of life by the testimony of a good conscience. It tells of servants of Christ whose main business in life is to commend themselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God. It describes the people of God as a people whose conscience has been purged from dead works to serve the living and true God, whose hearts have been sprinkled from an evil conscience. It tells of faith which is authenticated in them by a good,

a pure conscience, and it warns men in regard to some whose conscience has become seared by the perversity and wilfulness of their own sin.

That is a very incomplete sketch of what the Word of God has to say about conscience, but you see it has pretty nearly as much to say about conscience as it has to say about faith. When Paul puts this interpreting key of life into the hand of Timothy, and unites faith and conscience as vitally related to each other, he is in entire harmony with the whole teaching of divine revelation.

What Is Conscience?

Now conscience is so much a part of ourselves that the whole web of our personality would have to be unwoven to get at the secret of conscience.

Whether, for instance, conscience is the echo of God's voice in the soul, or whether conscience is the direct testimony of experience handed right down the race, is not a matter of any very great concern to us, since conscience is just the abiding and sleepless witness within us of an unchanging moral order into which we have been put by divine power and providence.

Conscience is certainly not a mere moral intuition which is unevenly developed in men and women. Conscience can never be an independent and an unregulated source of law or authority. Conscience can never be regarded as an infallible standard of conduct, for unregulated conscience may lead men to incredible stupidities, and even worse, to hard courses which involve the well being of others as well as themselves. Conscience may sometimes become an excuse, and a valid excuse to the person involved, for the violation of every possible ethical standard. Why, history tells of martyr fires which were lighted by conscience upon conscience, and observation tells of homes that have been ruined, and families that have been broken up, of lovers that have been separated, and of lives that have been exiled, all by ill guided and unregulated conscience. Men may do things for conscience' sake which are entirely wrong. Men may follow a light which becomes dark, and then how great is that darkness! Paul himself, who is talking here about conscience, said about his own conscience, "I verily thought that I ought to do some things contrary to the teaching of Jesus of Nazareth, which things I did." Conscience made him the guilty participator in the martyrdom and murder of Stephen; no doubt of that!

I have here a good watch. It is a watch that keeps excellent time: sixty seconds to every minute, and sixty minutes to every hour. If that watch was not synchronized by the standard time here in America, although it was performing its functions accurately, it would lead me wrong, and it might tell me that it was seven o'clock when the accurate time was about three. It has got to be synchronized, it has got to be set by some recognized standard. Conscience too has to be regulated by some unchanging and invariable authority, which is God's holy Word; which brings us back upon this necessary conjunction in the Christian life, of faith in the revelation of God by Jesus Christ, and conscience, this inner index and faculty of moral judgment.

Conscience then, not being any of these things, is what? Conscience is that faculty, that capacity, that sensitive organ of the soul, on which the Spirit of God projects God's will, that we may apprehend it and that it may judge us.

I will give you a very simple illustration. It is like the white lantern sheet on which is projected the image of the thing that is put behind the lens and before the lamp. Conscience is that, and consequently conscience becomes both indicative and imperative, conscience becomes both commendatory and condemnatory in any life.

You try to take some unholy road, and there is a barrier which prevents your doing so without difficulty. That is conscience. You stand before two moral crossroads: one path is obviously right, the other path is obviously wrong, and you find erected at those moral crossroads an index finger saying, "This is the way; walk ye in it." That is conscience. You listen to conflicting voices of counsel, to the voices of the world, to the voices of ambition, of expediency, and you find that there is a great diapason which either creates a compelling harmony or a compelling discord. That is conscience, and you know which voice to follow. You do, as we all have done, a wilful, perverse thing,

and you find within you there is set up a judgment seat, a great assize, with judge and jury and all; and a sentence, a life sentence is passed upon you, that of self-degradation and the permanent loss of self-respect. That is conscience. Or, on the other hand, you act in opposition of convention and in favor of some great moral conviction, and there is a glow of moral health which is not, as the cynics would say, "mere smug self-satisfaction," but a tonic breeze from the hills of God, bracing you for the next duty. That is conscience.

We all know by these simple illustrations of its action in our own lives by our own experience.

Faith and Conscience.

Now, since conscience cannot rule independently, but is interdependent upon faith, and faith itself is interdependent upon a revelation of God, we come to this great word again, the union of faith and conscience; that is, of faith in Christ's revelation of God and God's will. For there, my friends, is the ultimate judgment of our every action, of our every attitude. It is in the presence of God.

A good test of your faith and mine is just this: Does your conscience kindle into flame at contact with Jesus Christ? Does it give a determining quality to your convictions? Does it outrun the feet of consideration and give immediate judgment to your mind as to what he would have you do consistently with your profession of discipleship? Does your conscience assume inexplicable authority so that to disobey it would be sheer treason?

Why, the man who professes to have much faith, but who has little conscience, is rather like a ship which is furnished with an ensign and with a chart, with the open view of the stars, and with all the internal mechanism necessary to navigation, but which has no compass on board! There is only one thing lacking in the equipment of that vessel, but that one thing is absolutely vital. That is why many a Christian life is, as I said at the commencement of this talk, ineffective and unsatisfying. There is no sensitive compass needle of conscience on board.

My friends, nothing else validates faith. You cannot validate faith by historical accuracy of the thing you believe. You cannot validate faith by calling something orthodoxy and something heterodoxy. You cannot validate faith by calling this thing fundamental, and that thing incidental, and making your choice of patronage between the two. Listen! "The devils believe, and tremble," says the Word of God. Men believe, and smirk if their faith is not allied to conscience.

The distinctive proof of faith is its moral product. The man who protests his faith in any other terms but the terms of life simply writes himself down as a self-deceived theorist, a dilettante in the field where men must labor by the very sweat of their soul. He writes himself down as a superior onlooker on life. Not a hypocrite necessarily, for that man does not deceive anybody but himself. When you are inquiring about a man for a position of responsibility and trust, you do not ask what he believes, but you ask what kind of a man is he, is he a trustworthy man? You do not ask whether he is a man of orthodox faith, but you do ask whether he is a man of genuine and pure life. So the man who protests his faith in any other terms but those of eloquent moral sincerity, does not deceive anybody but himself. But he deceives himself tragically, for the inexorable rule of life is remorseless in this and every other field. It is this: There are no short cuts on a straight road. There are no short cuts to abiding good in the field of life.

The fields of these moral satisfactions for which God made us are not reached by any easy, effortless, sheltered path which we call faith. Morality cannot be compounded for by holding pious opinions and then calling that exercise faith. No, my friends; we need to give very earnest heed to this word if we are to realize the end of the Christian discipline, and to live by true love toward God and man, which is true holiness.

I ought to say one thing more, and it is this: Of course we do not take kindly to words like "must" and "ought." None of us take kindly to the austere shadow of moral compulsion. Every one of us is an anarchist in the last analysis of our make-up. Every one of us resents government. And yet nothing will ever meet our

need, the need of our nature, nor satisfy our instincts, but the coronation of the conscience as the consort of faith, the coronation of that strange, intangible faculty, the deepest in our being, which says "ought" and "must" unaccommodatingly and uncompromisingly in the words of this text. Only so will we retain the pure heart and realize the love life that God predicates. For all these streams are confluent, all these four tributaries go to make up the great river of life.

Now I should be untrue to my trust in speaking this word to you if I made any suggestion that this life can be lived without conflict. It simply can not. Faith and conscience together, the revelation of God's will for my life and the urge within me, tell me that that is the only path that I can take: faith and conscience are often in combined opposition to my own unbridled will and passion, will which is influenced by feeling and preference; hence there is a ceaseless and hard struggle to live this Christian life worthily.

Yet every disregard of conscience so enlightened and informed is sin. Whatsoever is not of faith is sin. And sin registers itself in the conscience by making the conscience less sensitive, by desensitizing the conscience. That is what the Word of God means when it speaks of men's conscience seared as with a hot iron. Supposing you take a hot iron and drop it upon the flesh of your hand, you know what would happen after the pain of the blister and everything else had gone: the skin there would be hardened and deadened. You can put a needle point into it, and it will not cause you to wince. According to God's Word sin does that for the conscience. Sin is registered not in a great leather volume in the unseen world: sin is registered in the man who sins. The wages of sin is sin, and more sin, and a hard, insensible conscience.

In London we have one of the very great observatories of the world, the Greenwich Observatory, from which, you know, the meridian of Greenwich takes its name, and the time of the world is standardized. Some years ago some of the most valuable and delicate astronomical instruments in that observatory were found to be recording untruly. It was quite obvious to the trained electricians and astronomers there that these sensitive needles were being deflected hither and thither by false currents, and consequently they were not recording aright motions of earth and sky and stars. They made patient and expert investigation, and they found that about three miles off, on the other side of the river, an electric power station had been set up, and the great dynamos working in that electric power station were setting up what the electricians called false currents, and these delicate instruments were responding to false currents, and were consequently worthless for their own business.

My friends, that is an allegory of the thing I would be at with you in these closing words. Sin registers itself in conscience. Conscience, responsive to false currents, to influences which are not the influences of the divine Spirit, conscience itself suffers, the man deteriorates, and the holiness without which no man can see the Lord becomes impossible to him.

Conscience Renewed.

But—and here we get at the very heart of evangelical faith,—conscience is always being renewed,—blessed be God!—is always being rebaptized in the power which created it, if the authority of that power is not being denied. This is perhaps the greatest miracle, and what we call conversion, that a conscience that is scarred and seared can be remade until it becomes as sensitive as the conscience of a little child. This is the glory of the gospel which we preach to a poor, broken life: that God's grace reopens the deteriorated organs of moral vision and apprehension. And this miracle is constantly repeated. It occurs not only at first when a sinner comes to Christ, but it is repeated day by day in the life of the believer who realizes his own shortcomings, and whose repentance is the bitterest thing in his life. For just as pain in our physical life is nature's warning bell, urging us to seek the remedy for pain, so the pain of the sin smart when conscience has been disobeyed urges us back to Christ for the removal of the sin itself.

Of course the pain may be disregarded and with fatal results, but if it is obeyed, then to the enlightened believer there is

only one way that his feet can take day by day: it is Calvary-wise, it is back to the cross; and there the depth of that wonderful word, "If we walk in the light, as he is in the light, the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth us from all sin," breaks on the mind with hungering and uplifting power; and just as Naaman when in the Jordan received his flesh back as the flesh of a little child, so the child's conscience is renewed in the Christian day by day.

The Christian life is a living, struggling, growing thing, constantly in travail and constantly bringing forth. It has well been likened, by one who has stood on this platform and ministered to us the Word of God to our great profit, and likened in the most beautiful terms with which I am acquainted, to a tree, deep rooted in the past, some of whose branches have been smitten with the lightning of passion, or broken in some tempest shock, or weakened by some subtle growths, or dwarfed in the forest shade, but whose vaster spread is nevertheless flung abroad to the light of God, lifted toward the sky, renewing its own life, outgrowing its wounds, concealing its scars by the very processes of life itself, and reborn with each new springtime of the soul. I know nothing more beautiful than that description of Christian travail and growth and struggle and victory,—faith and a good conscience.

Then it is that the pure heart sees God with increasing clearness. Then it is, not that great moral achievements, not that great reformative works are the record of the soul, for these are after all the privilege of the few, but the quiet homely virtues, all comprehended in that great word "love," will have begun to characterize the life. And if you would know the country through which the upward paths of faith and conscience lead men, if you would know the kind of territory through which you have got to make pilgrimage with this inerrant guide and instinct within, responsive to the light, read afresh the 13th chapter of First Corinthians. That is the territory through which faith and conscience will lead us until the day dawn, and every shadow flee away, and we see him whom having not seen we have loved and have obeyed. For this is the objective of the Christian discipline, the love which proceeds from a pure heart and a sincere faith and a good conscience.

Our Father, who hast made us for thyself, and hast revealed thyself to us in Jesus Christ, and hast given to us both a pattern for life and the enduement whereby that pattern may be realized in our lives, help us as we commit ourselves afresh to thee in penitence for our shortcomings, in earnest desire that we may be what thou wouldst have us to be, men and women who reëcho thy Word, but who first of all reflect thy grace! Take us, we pray thee, our Lord: purify our faith by quickening our conscience, and send us out to live in the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ and the love of our God and the fellowship of the Holy Ghost forevermore! Amen.

A Sod School House in Western South Dakota, Sixty Miles from the Railroad. The Children Have Never Seen the Cars, or even a Town, and Represent Many Such Isolated Settlements throughout the West. What Might the Moody Colportage Books Mean to These Impressionable Young Lives?

THE 46th PSALM.*

Rev. Frederic C. Spurr.

This Psalm falls, you will observe, into three parts. It is really a hymn of three verses, with the chorus for each verse.

In the first three verses the picture is that of a whole world in the grip of a great natural power, with convulsions of nature, and how even in the midst of that pious souls can be at rest. "God is our refuge and our fortress, one who is quite near to us, to run into in our trouble. Therefore will we not fear, though the earth be removed and though the mountains reel into the heart of the ocean. Let the waters roar and be troubled, let the mountains shake with the swelling thereof." Add what has perhaps dropped out, the chorus, which occurs in verses 7 and 11: "The Lord of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our high tower."

Part two, verse 4 to verse 7, takes us to another kind of convulsion, due to the hostility of conflicting nations. "See, there is a river! The stream shall make glad God's city, the holy place of the tabernacles of the Most High. God is in the midst of her; she shall not be moved. God shall help her when the dawn begins to break. The nations were raging, the kingdoms were moved: he just spoke, and the earth melted." Chorus: "The Lord of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our high tower."

The third part comes as a specific example of something that has evidently recently happened, and the effects of which are open for everybody to observe. "Come, see these works of the Lord, what desolations he has made in the earth! He makes wars to cease unto the end of the earth, he breaks the bow, cuts the spear in sunder, burns the chariot in the bonfire,"—things customary on ancient fields of battle, when the bows were broken, the spears split, and the chariots all heaped together in one great fire to indicate that the engagement was through. "Be still, and know that I am God! I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth." And the hymn terminates with the chorus the third time: "The Lord of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our high tower."

Now, there are certain of the psalms to which pious souls instinctively turn when they find themselves in certain situations. I suppose ever since the 51st Psalm was written, or ever since it was incorporated in this great hymnbook, it has been turned to by penitent people. Today when we wish to express ourselves after sin, and the Spirit of God has touched us to penitence and to conversion, there is no greater vehicle for the expression of our deepest self than in the words of the Miserere, the 51st Psalm. If you eliminate one or two of the local and Jewish allusions, there is nothing in the psalm that we could not take upon our lips today. "Have mercy upon me, O God, according to thy loving-kindness! Blot out my transgressions! Make me to hear the voice of joy and gladness! Create in me a clean heart, O God; renew a right spirit within me! Restore to me the joy of thy salvation!" Though 2500 years separate us from the writer of that psalm, penitence feels, devotion feels, that in that ancient psalm there is a vehicle for the expression of the deepest feeling of the soul.

I suppose sick people and dying people right to the end of the chapter will want the 23rd Psalm read to them. They will not stop to ask who wrote it or why it was written. They will eliminate all the Bedouin ideas. "The Lord is my shepherd. I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever." Nothing that criticism can give in the way of explanation, in the way of elucidation, will ever destroy that eternal element that lies for devotion in the 23rd Psalm.

So with the 46th Psalm. To the end of time persons who are hard pressed, who are in tight corners, nations that believe themselves to be doing the will of God, who have clean hands and an honorable record, and are embarking upon adventures which are for the greatest good of mankind, but who in that quest are hunted and wounded by those who rise up against them, will always turn to a psalm like the 46th.

The reason, of course, that people do this is a simple one. It is for the same reason, I suppose, that animals when they are sick

* Northfield General Conference, August 1922.

turn to certain herbs and grasses that instinct directs them to, which will cure them of their maladies. How do they happen to turn to these things, these creatures which know naught of botany and which probably have never sampled the herb before? The scientific man tells us it is the experience of their clan, that heredity has taught them. When the cat turns to a certain grass, nibbles it and chews it, it is not one animal that is sampling one blade of grass: it is the whole cat tribe right back as far as cats were, that have brought their hereditary experience into that one animal and work through its instincts. There is a clanship in religion, there is something which we call spiritual heredity that comes into the consciousness and soul of the individual, he knows not how, but it has come from the experience of the whole clan. We do not stop to ask why we turn to the 14th chapter of St. John, or the 23rd Psalm, for consolation. We do not stop to ask why we recite the 51st or the 32nd Psalm when we have sinned deeply. But pious souls have turned to these psalms as the experience of the clan has taught us, and we have entered into that inheritance, and make use of it very often without knowing why.

Psalm of the Hard Pressed.

The 46th Psalm is the psalm of the hard pressed. It has been sung by the servants of God throughout the centuries in times of crisis.

Do you remember how Martin Luther, in those dread moments when pressed beyond measure, used to find consolation by saying to his friend Philip, "Now, Philip, come and let us sing the 46th Psalm"? Once when he was harder pressed than usual, his wife Catherine turned to him and said:

"Martin, is God dead?"

And he roughly said, "What do you mean, woman?"

"Oh," she said, "the 46th Psalm!"

She had known what had taken place between her husband and his friend Philip, and it was this 46th Psalm that restored the equilibrium to this disordered man.

When the uprising took place in Kabul, the British garrison there was beleaguered, and there was dread when it was thought that it could never come out alive. There was a private named Henry Havelock, a godly man who never concealed his colors, never stifled his confession of faith no matter who was by. Known to be a godly man, he was asked to act the chaplain's part on a given Sunday. He took the Anglican Prayer Book, and picked the psalm for the day, but when he got to it his instinct awoke. He said, "Instead of the psalm for the day, let us say together, and mean it, the 46th Psalm."

So in times of crisis and in times of hard pressure godly men have found their consolation here.

We shall all of us say this psalm, and sing it, and remember it, and mean it, far more intelligently when we understand the reasons that gave birth to it, and the historic situation which it reflects.

The Historic Background.

The events which probably led to the penning of this 46th Psalm occurred in the early part of the eighth century before Christ. One of the greatest kings of Judah was reigning in Jerusalem, King Hezekiah, and one of the greatest statesmen was in Jerusalem to support him, one of the greatest prophets of God, the statesman and prophet Isaiah. The greatest military power in the world of that day was the power of Assyria, unscrupulous, cruel, bitter to the last degree. Sennacherib, drunk with power and lust of blood, was scourging the whole of the East. He comes down to Jerusalem. Hezekiah tries to buy him off. The history of the time is found in the second book of Kings, the 18th chapter, and also in the 33rd chapter of the book of the prophet Isaiah. The whole story is found in these three places: the historian's account in 2 Kings 18, the statesman's account in Isaiah 33, and the poet's account in Psalm 46. In the historical account we find that Sennacherib came down, and bullied and threatened, and in order to settle with him, to buy him off, Hezekiah cut the gold from the doors of the Temple and from the pillars which Hezekiah had overlaid, and gave it to the king of Assyria. He gave him what gold he wanted, thinking the incident ended. But that was not what Sennacherib wanted. Not long afterwards Sennacherib returned,

and 2 Kings 17 tells us that he sent a great army against Hezekiah and against Jerusalem. Utterly unscrupulous! Having got first money and loot, now he comes against the city itself, and the story is given in the 18th chapter.

In order to understand Psalm 46 you must notice what took place when the king of Assyria came against Jerusalem. The person who is here called the Rabshakeh, the generalissimo, if you like, of the whole army, enters upon a harangue, makes a great speech to the leading people of Jerusalem. That speech must be understood before we can appreciate the delicacy of the 46th Psalm. I know of no speech in the Bible, or in all literature, for that matter, that so perfectly gives the ideal of a polished scorner, a rationalist. He was a man who did not believe in God, who did not believe in spiritual powers, who was entirely attached to things material; and he harangued the leaders of Jerusalem. Let me give you one or two specimens of his rationalism.

He was one of those very clever men who knew the language of the persons he had come to conquer. The Rabshakeh stood and cried in a loud voice in the king's language, "Hear the word of the king of Assyria! Thus saith the king, Do not let Hezekiah say anything to deceive you! He is not going to deliver you out of my hand. And do not let Hezekiah make you trust in your Lord, saying, The Lord will deliver us out of this city, and it shall not be delivered into the hand of the king of Assyria!" Then he says, "Has any of the gods of the nations delivered his land out of the hand of the king of Assyria?" And he finishes by advising surrender. "Now, don't you listen to your king! Pay no heed to his religion, for his god and your god will not help you. Gods are no good against an army like that of which I am the head. This is the offer I make you: Come and make an agreement with me by a present, and come out to me. Open your gates, and then I promise you that every man of you shall eat of his own vine, and every one of his fig tree, and drink every one the waters of his cistern."

You see the point? You have in Rabshakeh the ideal of a polished scorner, a man who does not believe in God at all, who makes scorn and fun of other people's religion, who believes only in force.

Here, then, is this man outside the walls of Jerusalem talking to the leaders of the people on the walls in the language of the people within, and hereby trying to dishearten them and cause them to surrender the city into the hands of the enemy. That is outside the city.

What is going on inside the city? The king is there, and the king's best friend, a real statesman and a prophet too, the prophet Isaiah. Shall we turn to what Isaiah has to say about it? You get the other side of the story in Isaiah 33. First of all, at the beginning of the chapter there is his plaint, "Woe to thee that spoilest, you treacherous power!" And then, "O Lord, be gracious to us! We have waited for thee." This is Isaiah's prayer at this time. But how canny is the end of his prayer, "Look upon Zion, the city of our solemnities (20)!" And then to the people, "Your eyes, my people, shall see Jerusalem a quiet place to live in, a tabernacle that shall not be taken down; not one of the stakes thereof shall be taken up, not one of the cords shall be broken. But there the glorious Lord will be unto us a place of broad rivers and streams. No galley with oars shall come up that river, neither shall gallant ships pass thereby. For the Lord is our judge, he is our king, he will save us."

That is what was taking place inside the city. Thank God when you have a statesman like that! Thank God when you have a seer like Isaiah! What an asset to a country to have a few people of that man's stamp in the moment of their crises, a man who can steady people not by honeyed words and false promises, but by faith in the living God; who can put a concrete case before the people so marvelously as to still them all, and in stilling to give them a power by which they shall finally go out and resist the attack of the enemy!

It is a wonderful picture that Isaiah draws. "The Lord is going to be to us a place of broad rivers and streams." Everybody knows that Jerusalem was the one great city of antiquity that was handicapped in this particular, it had no river. You know what an asset a river is to a city. What do you think old Venice would have

been without its canals and its river and the sea? What do you think Rome would have been without the Tiber? And what would dear old England have been without the Thames? But there was no river here. Friends, think of Isaiah's prophecy! Use your imagination, get back into that situation and see what it meant, the glory and the majesty and the faith of it!

The prophet says, "Here we are handicapped, we have no river. We cannot escape. There is no body of water between us and the enemy to prevent them from coming over, and that while they are coming over we can spear them or arrow them. It is all right! We do suffer from this natural handicap, but it is all right! What we lack, God will make up. God himself is going to be our river. He will come and save us. You need have no fear."

What was the effect of the exhortation? Two things. There is a very pretty little touch. Turn once more to the history in 2 Kings 18. The Rabshakeh had been delivering the harangue and seeking to weaken the people's resistance, and then Isaiah had said his word and told them to put their trust in God, and the people held their peace and never answered the scorner a word; for the king's commandment was, "Now, do not say anything to him!" They held their peace. And what happened? The picturesque language of Holy Writ words it thus, "And that night the angel of the Lord went through the camp of the Assyrians, and, lo! in the morning there were 180,000 corpses." And Sennacherib, finding that his army had melted away like snow beneath the hot rays of the sun, hastened back to Assyria, and it was not long before two of his blood relatives, being envious of him, stabbed him and took his place. That is the historic situation. Then it was that some ancient poet wrote the 46th Psalm.

You see it is all photographed there. You have the raging of the heathen, the calmness of the people, the exhortation to come and behold the deliverance just wrought, and you have Isaiah's picture of the river. You must read it as I read it to you just now. "Look, look! There is a river!" It is the reflection in poetry of what Isaiah promised in prose, "God will be to us a river." Then there is the same exhortation as Hezekiah had given to the people, "Be quiet, don't say a single word!" here reflected in "Be still, be still, and know that the Lord is God!"

The Message for Today.

What message has all this for us who are living today?

Well, the experience of Isaiah and of Israel has been repeated in history. The church of God is often besieged, our faith is challenged, we are threatened, we are hard pressed in a hundred ways. So with the individual. All of us know Rabshakeh under one of his many aliases.

In my early days, when I was a student, I came across him in one form. I was frightened to death of him. He took the form in those days of saying, "Well, do you want anyone to value you for your intelligence? How can an intelligent man exercise faith? It is believing what you cannot see, the unreal. Why don't you get something substantial?" That was the Rabshakeh of that period. Of course he has had his day, and gone like the rest of them. They have all had the angel of the Lord after them. You need not worry, they all will: that is their fate to the end of time. For nowadays, I suppose, we have come to understand that instead of faith being set over against reason, and faith being a small thing, faith is the biggest thing that you can exercise, and if it is properly exercised you are at your best and at your highest. Thomas Carlyle says, "When is a man at his fullest stature? When he stands erect, looking like the eagle toward the sun? No: when he is on both knees, prostrate before his God!"

Rabshakeh takes the form today of telling us, even telling Christian people,—this was a devout people to whom the Rabshakeh spoke,—that religion is played out, the church has finished its evolution, the best thing is to surrender, faith is useless, we had better put our trust in visible helps. It comes in a thousand ways, this cynicism of the old polished scorner.

The question I want to ask is this: Can you sing this 46th Psalm? Are you able, am I able, as Isaiah was in Jerusalem, and as the ancient poet was, to sing this psalm? It has been suggested that Hezekiah himself wrote the 46th Psalm. It is a hypothesis,

and I do not press it, but he wrote two hymns that we know of, and I do not see why he should not have written this. Whoever wrote it, it is a great song to have. Can you sing it? Taking away the local allusions, have you and I a faith that is so full of clearness, of penetration, that when a modern Rabshakeh comes with his suggestion that in the circumstances the only thing we can do is to capitulate and rely upon brute forces to save ourselves, do we believe so in spiritual realities that we can sing the 46th Psalm?

The only way we can sing it is the way in which this person composed it and sang it. To sing a song like this we must have an experimental knowledge of God.

No vague knowledge will ever suffice a person in a crisis. There is a sentence that I got from Faber years ago that has haunted and helped me perhaps more than any other of his. He said, "Beware of the unpreparedness of over-preparation!" Don't you know the person who is going to do one big thing in life, and it is all rehearsed magnificently, every turn of it, and then it doesn't come off, because something comes up at the last moment that deflects the person from the direction he has taken? The best preparation is sometimes the general preparation which leaves the details alone, so that there is an adaptation with the rapidity of lightning to the new circumstances of the moment.

What we want is that general preparation. "When Rabshakeh comes into my life, I will summon all my arguments and forces." No. The person who is going to meet Rabshakeh when he comes, and sing this song when the pressure is greatest, has got to learn it in quiet ways and quiet days. It is born in habitual communion with God. For who is the man that sings this song? Let us see what surrounds Hezekiah. This is the man the best of whose knowledge is in penitent surrender to God. This is the man who put the Temple right, who in the first year of his reign, when he was 16, started and did in one month what would have taken most men six or eight months to do, so earnest and hot and pious was his soul. In the moment of my pressure, in the moment of my difficulty, if I have to turn to God and seek him for the first time, I shall probably miss my way. But Hezekiah had behind him the guaranty of history. The Lord of hosts is and was the God of Jacob. One of the greatest arguments with which a man or woman can fortify the soul is the long, historic story of piety.

Young people, particularly, when doubts and difficulties come to you, and the Rabshakeh comes with his scorning to challenge you, do not forget that the way you have to tread is not a way you have to blaze for the first time! It is a highway cast up and hardened by the pressure of millions of pilgrim feet. Some people are debating, even in the year 1922, as to whether prayer is valuable, or not. Use your imagination! Do you suppose humanity would have been praying for these thousands of years if it had all been a gigantic illusion? When you are treading the way of faith, you are not treading a new path. The God of Jacob, the God of history, supports your personal faith.

The next thing is that it is supported by a life of habitual communion, and that knowledge of God so based brings that experience.

First of all, it brings God experimentally near to us. I read to you in another translation, "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble." God, who is ever ready and near, is our refuge. A person who has the knowledge of God that lies behind this psalm, finds that God is not distant in the moment of crisis, he is quite near to us.

And then God comes to us exactly as we want him, the Lord of hosts. The whole of this psalm is cast in a military mold, the Lord of hosts to match the hosts of Sennacherib, the hosts and power of the living God. The eternal God is to us just what we need him to be in the hour of our trouble. The God of comfort here, the God of peace there; here in the moment of strenuousness, when force is needed, the Lord of hosts.

Finally, we have in this psalm God as the supplier of our natural deficiencies.

Jerusalem, as I have said, had no river, and that was a great handicap. But the prophet says, "Behold, you have no natural aid in a river! God will be to you the

equivalent of that. He will be to you as a river." The handicaps of life constitute the greatest difficulty for most people. You wanted to do a certain thing in your life, and you have never been able to do it. Why? When you were young you had an accident, and the wound, though it healed, has left you lame, and that thing you wanted to do you never can do because of that handicap. There is a man who wants to go to the foreign field, his heart is burning with a divine enthusiasm, yet something went wrong with his throat, and he had to turn to business, and all the time his heart has been elsewhere. Most of us somehow or other have had a handicap. We lack that river. If we only had that one thing, it would complete our victory.

Now I want to say as I end, my friends, almighty God can be to every man and woman that which is lacking. This is not romance. The New Testament is full of this truth. Whatever be your handicap, God can meet it. Whatever lack there is in any man or woman is found in its completeness in the eternal God. I might put the crown on the whole thought by bringing in the word of St. Paul, "My God shall supply all your need." The Revised Version does not say "supply." It gives a picturesque word which fits exactly this situation, "My God shall fill up all your lack in Christ Jesus." You can turn to God with all your handicaps and with that in you that is lacking, and say, "My God, what I lack, fill thou up!" When that happens, Sennacherib's army will melt, your Rabshakeh will pass, and you and I together will sing our version of the 46th Psalm!

THE NECESSITY OF CHRIST—IV.*

Rev. John McDowell, D. D.

Having affirmed in the October number of the Record that Christ is a necessity to Christianity, in the January number that Christ is a necessity in three respects,—first, for Christian life; second, for Christian truth; and third, for Christian growth;—in the May number, that Christ is a necessity for Christian service and Christian fellowship, I come now to affirm,

Sixth: Christ is a necessity for Christian hope.

(1) That Christianity is preëminently a religion of hope, no one can doubt who knows and believes the teachings of the New Testament.

The Christians of the New Testament look forward. Their faces are aglow. Their words are vibrant with good cheer. Their lives are transfigured by joy. Life has taken on a new dignity. Man has been clothed with new power. It is an old world, yet a new world, made new because of the new hopes which stir in their hearts, produced by the gospel of Christ.

Christianity's message to the world is one of hope because it is a message of salvation. It declares that "God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (John 3. 16).

It is a message of hope because it is a message of good tidings to all the world. "Fear not, for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people! For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour which is Christ the Lord" (Luke 2. 10, 11).

It is a message of hope because it is one of good cheer, not of condemnation. "For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through him might be saved. He that believeth on him is not condemned, but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God" (John 3. 17, 18).

It is a message of hope because it reveals to us the fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man. Christianity roots all life in the fatherly will of God, and therefore assures us that we are not victims of heartless law or blind chance. "Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye

* Northfield Young Women's Conference, June 1922.

shall drink, nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment? Behold the fowls of the air; for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns, yet your heavenly Father feedeth them! Are ye not much better than they? Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field, which today is, and tomorrow is cast into the oven, shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith?" (Matthew 6. 25, 26, 30).

Finally, the Christian message is one of hope because it takes an optimistic view of the life here and the life hereafter. Its prayer is, "Our Father which art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven!" (Matthew 6. 9, 10). Its good cheer is, "Son, thy sins be forgiven thee!" (Mark 2. 5). Its comfort is, "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world!" (Matthew 28. 20). Its assurance is, "I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me shall never die" (John 11. 25, 26). Its consolation is, "Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions. If it were not so I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. and if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself, that where I am, there ye may be also" (John 14. 1-3). Its victory is, "In the world ye shall have tribulation, but be of good cheer: I have overcome the world!" (John 16. 33).

Christianity is a religion of hope in its ministry as well as in its message, in its service as well as in its spirit. It translates its message into a ministry of practical helpfulness. From the earliest times men were more ready to credit God with the purpose of hurting than they were to believe in his disposition to heal. Jesus Christ declared the love of God to all men in clear and unmistakable words, and then he proceeded to put his words into works of healing for diseased and tormented bodies, into works of deliverance for troubled and tortured minds, into works of comfort and courage for despairing and grief-stricken souls. The best summary of his works is found in the text of his first sermon, which was as follows: "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised" (Luke 4. 18).

When asked for proof of his Messiahship he gave it not only in terms of a message, but in terms of service. These are his words: "Go and show John again those things which ye do hear and see: the blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and the poor have the gospel preached to them" (Matthew 11. 4, 5).

Through his practical ministry to the needs of men Jesus awakened in them a new hope, and the impulse of this new hope created in them new life and new joy.

(2) The message of hope which Christianity creates is not merely a promise of "something better by and by," though it does promise that "the best is yet to come." "As it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man the things which God hath prepared for them that love him" (1 Corinthians 2. 9). "Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be, but we know that when he shall appear we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is" (1 John 3. 2).

Jesus does not leave men in their present misery simply enriched by a glorious hope. He puts into their hearts and minds a process which makes the present better and brightens all the future. The hope which Christianity promises is not only a new heaven, but also a new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness (2 Peter 3. 13). The hope which Christianity awakens and continually nourishes is the pledge of the salvation of the world. "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me" (John 12. 32). It is the spring of spiritual energy beneath all our Christian institutions and organizations, the vitalizing power of all our missionary enterprize, and the transforming influence of all the achievements of the Christian church.

Christian hope is not a mere sentiment

nor a passing feeling. It is allied not with weakness, but with strength; not with misty speculation, but with firm certainty based on the laws of reality and righteousness.

Christian hope is more than immortality in terms of existence or continued existence. Hope in future existence yields no inspiring joy. The mere fact I am to live tomorrow or to continue to live forever does not in itself move me. It awakens no raptures within my soul. Something must be joined with existence before it becomes a joy-giving power. Immortality must be united with character before it can inspire or satisfy the soul. The distinguishing characteristic of Christian hope is that it connects immortality with character, and thus it does for the doctrine of immortality what is absolutely necessary to make it a vital power in the soul of man. It connects it with a living Christ.

Christian hope offers men immortality plus character,—in a word, eternal life, abundant life. Jesus found a doctrine of immortality in his day held in terms of future existence. He transformed this doctrine into a doctrine of immortality in terms of life, eternal life, everlasting life, abundant life. "I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand" (John 10. 28). "I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly" (John 10. 10). He charged the doctrine of immortality with an ethical content, and made it to consist in a knowledge of God. "This is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent" (John 17. 3).

(3) The eternal life on which the Christian hope is built is not merely a continuance of being. This Jesus called death. "Jesus said unto him, Let the dead bury their dead, but go thou and preach the kingdom of God" (Luke 9. 60). The teachings of the New Testament make it clear that Jesus did not withhold future existence from the wicked. "Then shall he answer, saying, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these, ye did it not to me. And these shall go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into life eternal" (Matthew 25. 45, 46). Of what value is adding days to days or years to years if they are full of sin and selfishness? A man may exist without Christ, but he cannot live without Christ. Life apart from Christ is not life, light is not light, and love is not love. Eternal life is the product of Christian hope. The Gospels make it clear that Christ came into the world to lift men out of existence into life, and hence we read in the New Testament, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation, but is passed from death unto life" (John 5. 24).

Christian hope brings to man a life that death and time cannot touch, a life hid with Christ in God, a life that gives man the victory over sin and the grave. "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ!" (1 Corinthians 15. 55-57).

The eternal life which Christianity offers in Christ is not a series of isolated springs, but an ocean laving every shore. It is one, and has its source in Christ, as life and truth are one, and live in him. When one thinks of eternal life in man as one thing, and eternal life in God as another, he has lost the key to the meaning of the teachings of Christianity. Nothing deserves the name of eternal life in us that cannot be affirmed of God. Eternal life, which is the basis of Christian hope, is first in God, next in Christ, who is God incarnate, and finally in any man who is willing to come into personal fellowship with Christ. "He that eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him. As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father, so he that eateth me, even he shall live by me" (John 6. 56, 57).

(4) Christian hope centers in the person of Jesus Christ.

He proclaimed himself as the embodiment of this hope, and by his own resurrection the promise was sealed. "I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live. And whosoever liveth and believeth

in me shall never die. Believest thou this?" (John 11. 25, 26). We date Christian hope from the hour

When from the grave he sprang at dawn of day,
And led through boundless air thy conquering road,
Leaving a glorious track, where saints, newborn,
Might fearless follow to their blessed abode.

Christian hope leads us from trust in a future event to trust in a living present Person. Martha in her sorrow had affirmed her belief in a resurrection at the last day. Jesus knew that this belief was giving her no comfort, and immediately he led her from her belief in a future event to belief in a present Person, and that Person himself. Hope carries us beyond our trust in Christ's promises to trust in himself. We believe in his promises because we believe in him. With Christ it is "I am," not "I give." "He that believeth in ME,"—not merely in my gifts or my promises. Indeed, it may be said that we cannot have his gifts without having the giver. Faith in his promises involves faith in the promiser. Hence he asks Martha, "Believest thou this?" And her answer practically amounts to saying, "I do more than believe this,—I believe thee!" (John 11. 26, 27).

That Christ is the foundation of Christian hope no one can doubt who believes and accepts the teachings of the New Testament. Only as we are united to Christ can we have the joy of Christian hope. The hope of the New Testament Christians always centers in Christ. Writing to the Colossians Paul speaks of "Christ in us the hope of glory" (1. 27). Writing to the Thessalonians he speaks of "our hope in our Lord Jesus Christ" (1 Thessalonians 1. 3). Writing to Timothy he speaks of "our Lord Jesus Christ, who is our hope" (1 Timothy 1. 1).

Thus, everywhere throughout the New Testament Christian hope is rooted and grounded in the person of Jesus Christ. Apart from his words and his works there is no ground for the Christian hope. Eliminate Christ, and you have no promise of the resurrection and life in the Christian religion.

Hope that is born of science and natural evidence awakens no joyful enthusiasm in the masses of mankind. It stands with a question upon its lips, tremulous at times, peering into the future with a troubled gaze, hoping rather than believing, and passing into the future with the peace of resignation rather than the joy of assurance. Christian hope—that is, hope that is born of trust in the person of Christ and belief in the promises of Christ,—voices itself in words of assurance such as these, "We know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens" (2 Corinthians 5. 1). In words of triumph, "I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Romans 8. 38, 39). In words of victory (1 Corinthians 15. 57). In words of comfort (John 14. 1-3). In words of peace, "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth give I unto you: let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid" (John 14. 27).

What Christianity offers to men is not life, or truth, or growth, or service, or fellowship, or hope, apart from Christ, but Christ himself. A man apart from Christ cannot be a Christian. He loses Christianity as absolutely as a hand would lose its use and its meaning if it were cut off from the body.

The acknowledgement that Christ is Christianity is bound up with New Testament Christianity. Take away this conception of Christianity, and you may have life left, but not Christian life. You may have truth left, but not Christian truth. You may have growth left, but not Christian growth. You may have service left, but not Christian service. You may have fellowship left, but not Christian fellowship. You may have hope left, but not Christian hope. Christian history and Christian experience affirm that Jesus Christ is a necessity if we are to have the Christianity of the New Testament, the Christianity that can and will save the world.

The A, B, C of the religion of Jesus Christ. A, Abide in me; B, Believe on me; C, Come unto me.—Rev. F. W. Ainley.

"SPREADETH THE GREAT WAVE OF THE GRACE OF GOD."

THE REVIVAL MOVEMENT IN BELFAST, IRELAND.

Rev. R. M. L. Waugh.*

Different ideas of the church have been held by different types of Christians. To some the church is an abstract spiritual conception, by which all souls that are striving after higher things in the power of God's Spirit are thought of as forming a community. It is an invisible church, with no laws and no organization. But the desire for a high spiritual life is not truly effective till it is expressed in a body. So we arrive at the institutional idea of the church.

The early Christians were convinced that God had elected the church from all eternity to be united by a special spiritual bond, and they took the word "ecclesia" straight from the Septuagint, where it is the sacred assembly of the Chosen People, thought of as gathered before God. Dr. Mason remarks, in a book of essays edited by Dr. Swete:

"The audacity of faith implied in the selection of the word escapes us. To us Christendom is the great mass of enlightened humanity with nineteen centuries of history to its credit, while the ancient Israel has receded into the position of a remarkable little nation whose chief function was to prepare the way for the new religion. To the first disciples it was far otherwise. Judaism was still an imposing fabric. So far as appearances went, it had a claim to represent all that was most venerable in religion. What inspired the little handful of disciples at Jerusalem, in Judea, and Galilee to set up so vast a counter claim? The fact that they did so is a proof of their absolute confidence in the Lord Jesus Christ."

In the remarkable spiritual movement in Belfast today one is constrained to believe that the church is recapturing its old unwavering confidence in its living Head. There have been such miracles of grace attending the preaching of the gospel that a striking significance is seen to lie in the title "Wonderful" given to God in the Bible. In multitudes of instances the springtime of the soul has come, the pulsating sap has been making its way into many of the branches of the Vine, and the splendid sight of new shoots breaking forth gives promise of great things to come. The religious atmosphere of Belfast is charged with evangelism, and many churches, rejoicing in fresh vitality, are pointing the sin-sick to the Great Physician.

A large Presbyterian church in Carlisle Circus has been the scene of splendid work. The building, which can easily seat 2500 persons, is built after the manner of Spurgeon's Tabernacle, with two large galleries seating nearly 700. A second mission was held in this building lately, and was conducted by Mrs. Booth-Clibborn, the "Maréchale." Crowds attended the services, and the results were most encouraging.

A very successful mission was also held in Ballymena, conducted by Rev. W. P. Nicholson. A large hall, which was specially associated with the 1859 and other religious movements, was used on this occasion. In spite of the propitious weather for farming operations the country people did not hesitate to crowd into the meetings an hour before the appointed time, so as to secure seats. Though the evangelist spoke specially to professing Christians during the first week, the number of people who were converted was remarkable. At the close of the mission 2500 people had decided for Christ.

In one of our Methodist churches a marvelous work of grace continues. In the campaign started in January over 2000 persons had beeen converted. Another big push for the kingdom is now in progress, and numerous trophies of grace are being secured.

Every observer of life can see evidences of man's capacity to seize great forces in

* Mr. Waugh is minister of a Methodist church in Belfast.

the world and bend them to his own convenience. Man has not the rapidity of a hare, but he has several means of locomotion which can enable him to outdistance the fleetest of animals. Man has not the marvelous sight of the eagle, but he can use a telescope to discover a star whose light has been calculated to take 10,000 years to reach the earth. He has not the strength of the lion, but he can employ some explosive material to shatter in pieces a mighty rock. But most of all he displays his wisdom when he uses spiritual forces to gain the victory over the animal side of his nature. The cross of Christ is the most powerful crane in the universe: it can lift any man provided he allows the Holy Spirit to do his work. Multitudes in Belfast can now sing from experience:

When no one but Christ could help,
Love lifted me.

At a recent testimony meeting an old soldier told how he had been lifted.

For many years he had been immersed in sin. More than half the pay he received in the army he expended on drink and gambling. One day a newly-born infant took ill, and died. When the father called on the local vicar to take charge of the funeral he was told to bury the child himself. A friend got the little body put into a box, and along with the father he traveled three and a half miles to a cemetery. The country was covered with a mantle of snow, and a very high wall had to be scaled on the way. The father, red with rage, cursed the Almighty, and called on him, if he existed, to appear before him.

That was in the year 1891. In 1922 the youngest son of the home got converted at a mission in Belfast. The father noticed the changed behavior in the son, but beyond jeering at him he did nothing. A short time afterwards the hearts of another son and daughter in the home were glowing with the sense of the divine presence and love.

The 17th of January was the father's birthday, and he decided to take his youngest child to the movies in the evening. The child sobbed, and exclaimed:

"I don't want to go to the movies! I want to see Jesus!"

The man roared like an angry lion at the child. She was brought off to the place of entertainment, but during the performance the father was in too uneasy a mood to have any enjoyment. That night he could not sleep. Something made him think of eternity.

The next evening he went to the mission. The reading of the lesson quivered home to his heart. He became self-condemned when he heard the words, "Whoso shall cause one of these little ones which believe on me to stumble, it is profitable for him that a great millstone should be hanged about his neck, and that he should be sunk in the depth of the sea." The hammer of the Word smote his rock-like soul. He sought God's help till 2 o'clock in the morning, when he found the supreme Rest-giver.

His wife exclaimed: "For thirty-two years I have been praying morning and night for what has happened now!"

The father of the home is now an ambassador for Christ, and the home that was Satan's prison-house is now Christ's lighthouse.

The Christian church is an organism throbbing with supernatural life. Irenæus, one of the early Christian fathers, well said, "Where the church is, there is the Spirit of God; and where the Spirit of God is, there is the church, and all grace." The miracles of grace today are a significant evidence of the thought that when the ministry of the Holy Spirit is honored, supernatural results are bound to accrue. Many notable instances might be told of how the Spirit has dispelled men's stupefactions and wakened a sense of sin.

A young man of 24 years, a boxer in the army, recently got a vision of the Christ along his "road to Damascus." He had been a notorious drunkard, and had twice attempted suicide. Incapable of work, he was dependent on his wife's earnings at a spinning mill.

One day as he was about to mount a tramcar, he asked the conductor where the nearest public-house was. The tramway man replied:

"What you want is a drink of the living water."

He remained on the road, and at length found a public-house. But as he was about to enter, a girl handed him a tract. The "hound of heaven" was on his track,

and that night the man found no escape from "those strong feet that follow, follow after"; and during a mission service he

heard the trumpet sound
From the hid battlements of eternity.

His father, mother and sister are now converted, and drink from the magical streams of living water that flow from above.

One of the delightful issues of the revival is the widespread eagerness to influence others. The converts esteem it a privilege to be given an opportunity of testifying.

There is a changed attitude towards spiritual things in the shipyards. In one department of over 100 men four or five meetings, with 20 in each group, are held at the dinner hour interval. Moreover, one cannot help noticing the numerous open air meetings which are carried on so enthusiastically. Christianity in Northern Ireland is a force, but it is also an expeditionary force. Efforts are being made, individually and unitedly, to sound a big adherence along the line.

One of the tramway inspectors was recently converted, and saved from the slavery of drink and gambling. He is always glad to give his testimony. One evening he read out the reply he sent to a tipster who had previously written asking him would he put "a little bit on (his) Lincoln and National tips." The letter was as follows:

"Dear Sir, In reply to your letter I see by it that you have got the 'right goods' for the Lincoln and National, and you require a fee in advance before you will disclose the names of the winners. Well, I am sorry, but your information is too late, I am already on the 'right goods,' and my information costs me nothing. I have backed a racing cert., which I get straight from the Fountain-head, without money and without price. I see by your letter that there are one or two sharps enquiring about these 'goods,' and possibly there will be a rush to get on. Man, there have been thousands enquiring for this racing cert that I have got in Belfast for the past four months, and all those enquiring get the 'goods.' They make a fine double, and you can put your all on salvation through Jesus Christ. May God open your eyes, as he has opened mine, to see yourself a lost, guilty sinner without a hope of heaven unless you accept Christ as your Saviour and get your sins washed in the precious blood. Prepare to meet thy God! Yours truly, T. H. Moore, a sinner saved by grace."

Several testimonies of a similar tone are given every week in revival services in the city, and they have had a marked effect. Personal work is also bearing fruit. One boy of eleven years of age has been the means of leading a dozen people into the valley of decision.

A heavy burden of responsibility rests on the churches as they try to conserve the fruits of this campaign. Naturally when the emotions have been deeply stirred there is the temptation to judge uncharitably some of those who have genuinely devoted hearts and tranquil temperaments. In some churches there is such flaming earnestness that the converts need wise instruction to guard them from lapsing into religious cranks. Many, however, are already adorning the doctrine of Christ their Saviour. The revival movements of our time indicate how human nature can remain on splendid heights of character. Christianity is realized to be not a method, but a life. The breaking of chains of evil habit indicates the truthfulness of what an English-educated mandarin so well said to Dr. W. T. A. Barber:

"I am afraid of what your missionaries are doing. You are introducing dynamite!"

Let us remember in prayer this potential movement in Ireland, and let us cherish the hope that so many more souls may listen in to the heavenly music that they may be charmed to confess the voice divine. No panacea will be found for this disquieted country

Till we have built Jerusalem
In Ireland's green and pleasant land.

All religion is in the change from "He" to "Thou." It is mere abstraction as long as it is only "He." Only with "Thou" do we know God.—Thomas Erskine.

There's nobody perfect. That's the believer's bed of thorns, that's the hypocrite's couch of ease.—John Duncan.

ON TAKING NOTE AND NOTES.

Rev. Fred Smith.

In the old home town paper which as a boy I used to read with avidity, there was a column made up of the miscellaneous events and ejaculations which had occurred around town during the previous week. These things, being but the effervescent and ephemeral bubbles on the stream of life, have, like Longfellow's Arabs, silently passed away; but not so the sage counsel that, like a text, headed the column without fail every week in attention-compelling type. Those words remain with me to this day, unforgetable as the legend on the banner with the strange device in Longfellow's familiar poem. They were ascribed to the authorship of one "Cap'n Cuttle," a name whose very sound was reminiscent of the weird atmosphere of the strange South seas. Not yet have I trailed him to indentity, though somewhere recently I saw the words of my coming quotation ascribed to Dickens. But whose they were is at present neither here nor there. One thing I know: that they are mine, to have and to hold. And the words are these:

"When found, make a note on't!"

Of all the professions I know of none which can profit more from this counsel than the ministry. Of all men the minister should learn the happy knack of conserving ideas. Called upon as he is to speak to practically the same group of people twice and sometimes thrice each week, it behooves him to beware lest he fall into the habit of milling around within the monotonous area of the same old platitudes as the days and months go by.

Yesterday, in looking through the best portion of some modern magazines, I came across a pictured advertisement which appositely hits off the very thing I am desirous of saying. In a comfortable-looking home sits a young married couple. Hubby is absorbed in the evening paper, the wife sits "wrapped in silence" doing fancy work, and across the top of the picture is written the sad words:

"Talked out within a year!"

Wherein I see a parable of many a minister I have known, only sometimes it does not take a year for them to talk themselves out. In the early days of Methodism, when men were preaching every night, the shrewd John Wesley moved them on to other fields every three months. Those were the days when the "itinerant" had much opportunity for taking note of men, but little opportunity for taking notes. But now the times are changed. We can both take note and notes. And wise is that minister who sees the value of doing both. As ministers of the gospel we have ideals to proclaim. Some well-meaning men, transposing a declaration of Paul's to other and different times, have resolved to "know nothing among men save Christ crucified," only to find at last that instead of becoming mighty they became monotonous. The ideals which we as ministers are called upon to preach are few. The Decalogue consists only of ten commandments, the Beatitudes are expressed in eight sayings, and in these two groupings we have the essence of the law and the gospel. But the parables of Jesus are many. So likewise, though the ideals we preach be few, we need many ideas to convey the wealth and worth of them to our hearers. An ideal is like Joseph's coat of many colors: it is a combination of many ideas. Therefore is it well that a minister be a collector of ideas. Happy is he if he is gifted with "a nose for ideas"! If he be wise he will not only track down worthwhile ideas, he will also take them down. Wherefore, my brethren, I would have you take to heart the wise counsel of Cap'n Cuttle:

"When found, make a note on't!"

But do not forget that the conservation of ideas (to which I will return a little later,) presupposes the power of right observation. Ministers generally come upon this power more or less instinctively, though many fail to capitalize it to its full value. Wrote a minister to me recently in a personal letter:

"I turned a focal eye upon my community."

At once I made a note of that arresting phrase, "a focal eye." So much of what we see is nothing more than blur, we fail to focus the incident; but this man with open eye focalized looked out upon his community. So should we all! We need to take note of what is doing around us, what is being said, and what is being written.

And having said all this we go on to say that not half has yet been told. It is one thing to take note of things, but another thing to take notes on them. How often in listening to some speaker, or in the reading of some book, or in our meditation, we have been "stung with the splendor of a sudden thought," and we have said, "I will remember that"; but the day came when we sought to recall the happy phrase, and then we discovered the difference being taking note of a thought and making a note of it. I recommend not the device of the old divines who in taking notes in the past made of the cuffs of their shirts a hieroglyphic riddle, but I do recommend that for a minister it is a good thing to have at hand a small notebook with perforated leaves on which he can transcribe the essence of an elusive but eternal truth. That is to take note and notes. Then on arriving home it is easy to transfer the thought to its proper place in one's filing cabinet or clipping bureau.

With the description or comparative usefulness of the various devices for filing, indexing, and collecting thoughts and ideas I am not here particularly concerned. To each man his method! My point is to tell you how to get the ideas. Therefore I presuppose that you have the goods to write upon. Now comes the next step, how you will write upon them.

As I have observed how men regard their filing cabinets, etc., I have come to realize that the usefulness of these devices is in direct ratio to the way in which you think of them. Many there are who think of these idea-conserving devices as a refrigerator system for ideas: they provide a place where one can put ideas into cold storage. But with such a concept it is easy to find that that which was thought of metaphorically soon becomes an actuality. A better way is to think of our filing cabinet in the light of psychology. It becomes an adjunct to your subconscious self. Knowing that psycho-analysis has shown that every impressed thought is conserved in the subconscious self, we then know that if we make a note of a thought or thing in such a way that it dents our consciousness it will forever have vital relationship to the note that has been taken. So the psychologists say (see James), and so I believe. Whereas if you think of putting your ideas into cold storage you merely jot them down without giving the requisite attention to make them dent your mind.

Here we see the relation of one's memory to one's filing cabinet. Pedagogues used to make much of what they called mnemonics. By curious associative devices you were to be able to remember all things in heaven and on earth and under the earth. But now we see that we have no need to emulate the fabled Atlas who carried the world upon his shoulders. Time is too short to be forever mumbling over details for the aid of memory. The essential thing is that you so arrange your "annexed" memory, i.e., your filing cabinet, etc., so that you can readily turn to the knowledge you seek.

This, then, is the science and worth of taking note and notes. Look abroad with a focused eye! Learn to distinguish between the things that are merely interesting and those that are mightily important! Give attention chiefly to the latter, and if they lack interest it is your business as a minister to make them interesting. Then, having observed all things aright, do not only take note of them, but make notes on them! Thus will you gather up for yourself a growing fund of knowledge. Men will not say of you that your sermons are but the echo of the last issue of the "A—— M——" or of the "S—— E—— P——." Forever gathering ideas, "knowledge will grow from more to more," and in a way that perhaps you have thought not of, for knowledge rightly impressed upon your subconscious mind and rightly indexed in your filing cabinet is like money put out to interest. It simply grows by the accumulation of interest.

Then as you sit down at your desk you will have at hand for your aid memoranda as well as memory. Like birds to your window will come the thoughts that you have systematically and scientifically gathered through the years. Nay more than this is true, for in that hour thoughts that you have never indexed will come to inspire you. New combinations of ideas will be made possible. Men may even call you original! But you, being wise, will still keep on collecting, taking note and making notes, and entering weekly into the deeper meaning of the Master's words when he spoke of those who bring forth out of their treasury things NEW and OLD.

PERSONALIA.

General Bramwell Booth of the Salvation Army recently told a good story on himself.

"The old General," he said, "had a great liking for St. Peter, but I always thought him a rather wobbly type. On one occasion I said to my father, 'How can you explain the circumstance of Peter getting out on to the water and seeing Jesus, and then, with all this to convince him, suddenly losing his faith and sinking?' Well do I remember the old General's reply, 'Bramwell, my boy, you would never have got out of the boat!'"

Somebody said to **Gipsy Smith** a year ago when he was preaching one day to a congregation of colored people in one of the Southern states:

"What color will we be when we get to heaven?"

That was a new one on me, because, you know, there are more colored people in the world than white people. We have no monopoly of color. I said I did not know, but I added, "There is one thing I know, and that is we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is."

I told that story to 6000 colored people, and a dear old woman in front, nearly 100 years old, looked up and said, "Say, honey, shut yo' mouth! You ought to be in heaven now!"

Rev. G. Hartley Holloway, who will speak at the General Conference at Northfield this month, was trained for the Congregational ministry at New College, London, under Principal A. E. Garvie, D. D. During his college course Mr. Holloway became widely known as a preacher of distinction, and declined invitations to the pastorates of some famous churches. He was elected to the presidency of his college, which is the highest honor his fellow students could confer.

He began his ministry at Leigh-on-Sea, and after service in France during the war was called to the historic pulpit of the Above Bar Church, Southampton, where he still ministers with conspicuous success. It is interesting to note that the first name on the baptismal register at Above Bar is that of Isaac Watts, whose father was a deacon of the church, and whose hymns were first sung at Above Bar from Watts' own manuscripts. Visitors from America are often present in the church, and Mr. Hartley Holloway has many friends already this side of the Atlantic. He is regarded as one of the most promising men among the rising generation of Congregational preachers, marked out for big things.

An Old Preacher's Testimony.

The "Christian" (London) in a recent issue has the following significant words concerning a veteran minister whom the entire Christian world delights to honor:

"More than seventy years as a preacher of the gospel have now been completed by **Dr. John Clifford,** yet he does not feel that he has preached himself out, or that the gospel of the grace of God is played out. Indeed, his testimony is that if he had life to live over again, his choice of vocation would once more be that of a preacher of the Word. There has come to the veteran preacher in his closing years a call to a renewed emphasis in regard to the privilege and responsibility of personal evangelism. 'Our foremost need,' he says, 'is a more distinct dealing with persons. We are all in danger of seeking the crowd and forgetting the individual soul, its perils and its cares. Our chief task is to care for individuals, to watch for and to win souls separately. My greatest joy in my own ministry springs from the care I have tried to give to individuals.'"

Gift Subscription Fund.

Contributions are invited to send this magazine free to missionaries, and in special cases. Many requests reach our office. Any sum, small or large, will be welcome.

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17352.. 1 00	17353.. 10 00	17355.. 4 50

Receipts, May 15 to June 15.

Rev. Charles W. Abel's Work in New Guinea.

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17342.. 44 35	17345.. 5 00	

India (Sam Higginbottom).

17346 .....$1 00

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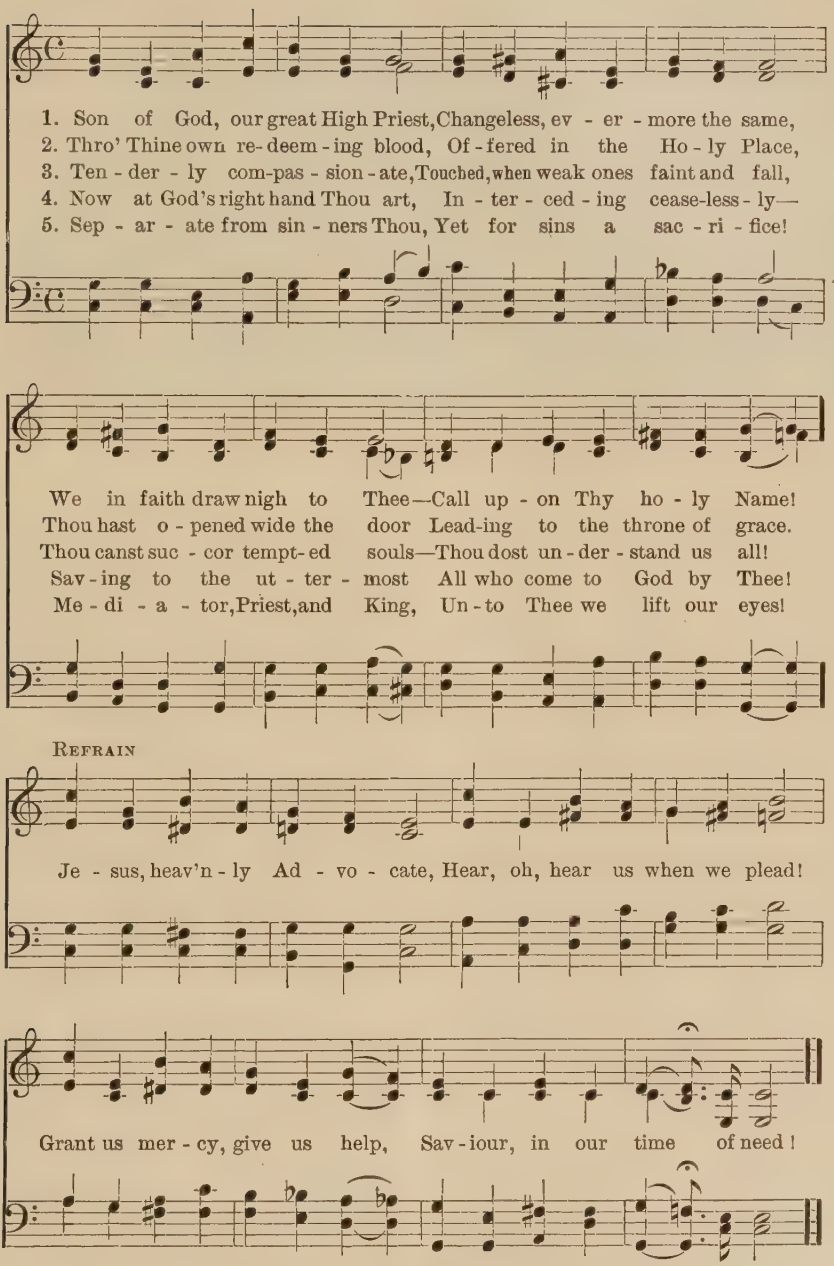
Our Great High Priest

A. A. P.

MAY WHITTLE MOODY


1. Son of God, our great High Priest, Changeless, ev - er - more the same,
2. Thro' Thine own re-deem-ing blood, Of-fered in the Ho-ly Place,
3. Ten-der-ly com-pas-sion-ate, Touched, when weak ones faint and fall,
4. Now at God's right hand Thou art, In-ter-ced-ing cease-less-ly—
5. Sep-ar-ate from sin-ners Thou, Yet for sins a sac-ri-fice!
We in faith draw nigh to Thee—Call up-on Thy ho-ly Name!
Thou hast o-pened wide the door Lead-ing to the throne of grace.
Thou canst suc-cor tempt-ed souls—Thou dost un-der-stand us all!
Sav-ing to the ut-ter-most All who come to God by Thee!
Me-di-a-tor, Priest, and King, Un-to Thee we lift our eyes!
REFRAIN
Je-sus, heav'n-ly Ad-vo-cate, Hear, oh, hear us when we plead!
Grant us mer-cy, give us help, Sav-iour, in our time of need!

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OUR BOOK TABLE.

The Red Man in the United States: An Intimate Study of the Social, Economic and Religious Life of the American Indian, made under the direction of G. E. E. Lindquist. George H. Doran Co., New York. 461 pages, with illustrations and maps. $3.50 net.

The aboriginal American comes into his own in this monumental volume. It is an exhaustive and authoritative work based upon expert surveys launched in 1919 by the Interchurch movement, taken over and brought through to publication by the Committee on Social and Religious Surveys. Data, which in 90 per cent of cases were obtained by actual field visits, were secured by the help of government agents, missionaries, native pastors and leaders, and other individuals and agencies. Upwards of 50 pictures and maps are a most useful feature.

After a thoughtful and forward-looking Foreword by the Hon. Charles H. Burke, commissioner of Indian Affairs, the contents divide into two parts.

Part I is general, dealing with the contact of red man and white through the centuries, and with administration and education. Chapters are given to the red man's native religion and ethics, to the influence of Christian missions, and to the vices and frailties of the race. Outstanding leaders in peace and war receive mention.

Part II occupies four fifths of the book with a detailed account of the 280 separate tribes or bands into which the 340,838 Indians (1921) are divided. These represent 58 distinct language groups, and are found in 161 reservations. Matters of tribal history and geography, education, health, evangelization, etc., are summarized for each tribe. Appendices give further summaries and statistics.

The first contact of Indian and white man was not only amicable, but cordial: indeed, the Indian regarded the white man as the messenger of the Great Spirit, and treated him with reverence. Soon treaties were made with the natives, only to be shamefully disregarded in most cases. President Grant started a peace policy which led to the segregation of the Indians. The present policy is—assimilation of the Indian into full citizenship, with economic independence based primarily upon education. 185,000 Indians are now citizens, and over 70,000 Indian children are in school.

Christianity claims 80,000 Protestant and 65,000 Roman Catholic adherents on the "Jesus road." Protestant work is carried on by 26 denominations and societies, having 597 mission stations and churches, 428 pastors and missionaries, and more than a million invested in buildings.

The Indians are increasing in numbers.

This volume will be the standard work on the American Indian for many years to come. It deserves a place at the beginning of the bookshelf of "American History." Its hopeful, sympathetic tone speaks well for the future of the race.

Caste and Outcast, by Dhan Gopal Mukerji. E. P. Dutton & Co., New York. 303 pages. $3.

A unique contribution—whether fact or part fiction,—to an understanding of certain phases of Indian thought and life, and, in addition, to the reaction of an Indian to certain phases of American life on the Pacific Coast. The book is advertised as the personal experiences of the author. The earlier part is mystical, poetic, Oriental; the latter part is a scream, as this thoughtful mystic makes his way through unpoetic adventures on the Coast.

Mukerji is a Hindu of Brahmin parentage, born and brought up in a small village near Calcutta. His family had for generations had charge of the village temple, and in due time Mukerji was initiated into the priesthood. His reminiscences refer to every day life with its significant and ever-present ritual, to the jungle and wild life, habits of childhood and youth, traditional stories and folk lore, the holy man, caste, idols, and other things, but especially to religion,—all interpreted from the native viewpoint, which will be new to most American readers. "Our Indian religion has no dogma, but it has ritual, which serves two purposes. One is to drill the soul, the other is to induce a spiritual experience through symbolism." His references to his mother and her training are beautiful, as also a chapter devoted to "My Little Sister," telling of girlhood.

After his initiation into the priesthood Mukerji made a pilgrimage, which opened new worlds to him. Then he went into business, later to Calcutta University, finally deciding to travel and study further, and so landing at San Francisco.

His experiences in the West read very

A Typical Indian Congregation. Members of the Umatilla Presbytarian Church, Oregon.

funnily, beginning with the baggage man on the dock, then seeking successive jobs as dish-washer and what not. He entered the University of California, but fell in with anarchists and socialists of different brands, and had almost unbelievable experiences: taking various jobs during vacations, meanwhile living in an intellectual atmosphere with his radical friends, reading and discussing the great books and theories of mental and economic and political philosophy. Upon receiving his degree he made lecture tours which brought him into touch with other more sophisticated strata of American life. "I found in America's air the sharp taste of freedom: not freedom from politicians, not freedom from economic conditions, but freedom from the dead. No dead generations rock the cradle of the new-born here."

It is a clever, unusual book, easy to read and well worth reading.

On the Bible.

Birth of the Bible (The), by Theodore Heysham. Judson Press, Philadelphia. 172 pages, with charts. $1.50 net.

What Bible? One good point in the book is that it differentiates clearly between the different Bibles that have been published all down the centuries, there being three Protestant and two Romanist Bibles before the public now, not speaking of translations by individual scholars.

Dr. Heysham presents the facts about the origin of the Bible, and its career in the different languages, in a clever way that enables a layman to grasp the successive stages. The charts also help. The spiritual aspect of the Bible is emphasized from the conservative standpoint, though there is no special discussion of inspiration and kindred themes.

He Opened to Us the Scriptures, by Benjamin W. Bacon. Macmillan Co., New York. 116 pages. $1.

A scholarly book on a most interesting subject, but it seems to us not as interesting as it ought to be except in spots. It is a brave book that faces facts and loves truth more than tradition; a book that realizes that the Spirit of God that has moved through the ages is moving still, and we, as honest men, are bound to follow. In following, our conceptions of the Bible and other matters may suffer, but in reality it will do no harm. As the author says, "the Bible cannot suffer from any method of real study any more than the sunbeam suffers when the spectroscope reveals it in its component rays; and the church that abuses such research is doomed to repentance."—H. P.

Biblical Themes.

Apostle Paul and the Modern World (The), by Francis G. Peabody. Macmillan Co., New York. 285 pages. $2.50.

Who was the real founder of Christianity as we know it, Jesus or Paul? Are the Gospels or the epistles the source of our theology? Was Paul a bold innovator, or a genuine exponent of Christ's gospel? Is there an underlying unity in the teachings of our Lord and Paul?

These questions indicate the problem that Dr. Peabody attacks with much historical learning and insight and suavity. His solution lies in discriminating between the

temporary and the permanent in Paul's teaching, and in applying the latter to the new age. Chapters are given to Paul the man, his various letters,—which should be studied as letters, not as intended theological treatises, hence not demanding advanced scholarship to discover what they meant,—his theology and religion and ethics in relation to the modern world, his relation to Jesus as messenger and Master. The whole teaching and character and personality of Paul are in fact worked over in an interpretative way.

A reader will mark many striking sentences and phrases, and will have his thinking apparatus shaken up by Dr. Peabody's forceful presentation of his views. An evangelical reader will rub his eyes at the use made of some well known texts, and the meanings read into—or out of—them. The argument is constructive on the whole, although there are jolts like these: "The deity of Christ is not a Pauline doctrine"; "There is little left of the humanity of Jesus in the Pauline Christ." On the other hand there are many fine passages, as where Paul's habit of prayer is lifted into the prominence it deserves.

Christian Fellowship, by Nathan Soderblom. Fleming H. Revell Co., New York. 212 pages. $1.50 net.

Second in a series of Christian Unity handbooks edited by Dr. Peter Ainslie. The authors are of various communions and nationalities.

A true union must be of spiritual fellowship. No organization can create this where it does not exist. Our eyes see the disunion and the diverse ritual, our faith sees the one only holy catholic and apostolic church, whose cornerstone is the Lord Jesus himself.

Christendom is divided into three main parts, the Orthodox, the Roman, and the evangelic, with various minor communions. In each of the large groups there are divisions. Some groups were put out, some went out. Sometimes the church was worldly and sinful, sometimes doctrines and rites were disapproved, sometimes the church did not grant the necessary freedom, or national life called for a national church with Free Church ideals.

The writer suggests three methods of union: by absorption, by faith, and by love. Current suggestions for unity are considered.—T. C.

Faith that Overcomes the World (The), by Van Rensselaer Gibson. Macmillan Co., New York. 110 pages. $1.

This volume is part of a rather noticeable stream, that threatens to be a flood, of books that would interpret Christianity in the terms of personal present well-being. The titles, "Overcoming Fear," "Overcoming Ignorance," etc., reveal its character. One can fill out the series with small risk of mistake without looking at the rest of the table of contents; at any rate he knows that the last one is "Overcoming Death."

The basic idea seems to be that Christianity is intended to give possession of the key to the control of the natural forces with which we are familiar. For instance, it is said, "The Master carried about no personal belongings for his own needs or for those of others. The explanation is that he was so fully the master of the law of spiritual attraction and abundance that at any moment of need he could draw at once upon the infinite source of all supply." Thus he who was careful to explain that he was poorer than the foxes of the field or the birds of the air is robbed of his very poverty by those who would again raise the cry, "This shall not be unto thee!" For the author is a Christian and a clergyman of the Episcopal church.

Prayer and the exercise of faith seem to be reduced to a sort of realization of the subconscious, a kind of self-hypnotism, a definitely religious auto-suggestion.

As is common to such writings, there is constant dilation on the limitless possibilities open to those who thus conceive Christianity. It does not indicate a spiteful spirit nor a flippant mind, but rather the natural effect of such writings is to inspire a question as to why the author is content, for instance, with such a "flat, stale, and unprofitable" style as that in which this book is written. The possibility of supreme literary achievement being open to him, why did he not utilize his opportunity to make the vehicle of his message at least a worthier thing?

Finally, the words, "This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith," in the source from which they are taken do not at all mean the semi-magical process that our author uses them to describe.—W. O. S.

If I Miss the Sunrise, by J. H. Chambers Macaulay. George H. Doran Co., New York. 223 pages. $2 net.

A very suggestive title of a unique contribution to religious thought! It is a "study in the reality of religion." In a sense it is biographical, for the intellectual and spiritual struggles depicted are the author's own. In his search after reality he finds no comfort from his modern philosophic studies. On the contrary, he says, "We are face to face with a rebellion of the human spirit against a self-assertive materialism." Nor do the attempts to reconstruct the religion of the New Testament made by critics appeal to him, since "among scholars themselves a reaction has set in against the vain effort to reconstruct the Gospels." His search for reality discovers a hunger for—"the constant presence and energy of an operating and living God." Ultimately he finds that "the drive within us, which is the desire for God, pushes us

back on revelation, when we discover the impossibility of reason to create a God for itself."

So the sunrise is Jesus Christ as depicted in and interpreted by the New Testament. "Every man must discover his own faith for himself. We found belief in God and immortality impossible apart from Jesus Christ. The concrete and historic Christ alone revealed God to us in terms of realization and experience. Without the sense of the personal God in the actuality of the personal life, we are left with the memory of a heart-stricken child to a cold despair."

It is exceedingly refreshing to follow our author as he works his way through his doubts until there flashes upon him the glory of the Christ of the New Testament. He closes with a significant sentence:

"If modern men and modern thought miss God's sunrise, it will not be for lack of opportunity, nor for the vision of the morning in the vivid realization of what the reality of the religion of Jesus is and can accomplish. 'I am the light of the world: he that believeth on me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.'"—S. C. H.

Our Common Faith: A Symposium. George H. Doran Co., New York. 136 pages. $1.25 net.

There are six sermons in this book, the sixth being that of Canon Dorrity, rector of the church in Manchester, England, where five were delivered by Noncomformist ministers on the articles of the Apostles' Creed.

They are not remarkable, but the circumstances of their delivery make them significant. The least satisfactory is probably that on the article "I Believe in the Holy Spirit." The most stimulating is on, "I Believe in Jesus Christ." They reveal the fact that Anglicans and Nonconformists are at one in their central beliefs.

Pastors will read with understanding and real sympathy Canon Dorrity's words in which he refers to the way in which the meetings turned out. "The church was only comfortably filled for the first three addresses, and little more than half full for the remaining two. But there is little doubt that this was largely accounted for by the extremely unfavorable weather we enjoyed, and by the close proximity of Christmas and New Year. I think that our Noncomformist brethren predominated in numbers, and I was exceedingly impressed by the fact that each day men were at least as three to two women, and they very generally past fifty years of age."—W. O. S.

Saint Paul on Christian Unity, by John B. Cowden. Fleming H. Revell Co., New York. 208 pages. $1.50 net.

A book on Christian unity based on a study of the Epistle to the Ephesians.

After a few introductory chapters on "The Call Today for Unity," "Is Christian Unity Possible?" and "Is It Practicable?" the writer takes up Ephesians as the warrant and authority for such unity. He follows the natural divisions of the epistle, as follows, chapters 1-3, "The Church for All," and chapters 4-6, "All for the Church." Under the first division he treats of the plan and the Head of the church, terms of entrance, plan of unity, the dynamic for unity. Under the second division he treats of the character, doctrine, service, conduct and battle of the church, closing with the outlook for Christian unity.

It is a thoughtful, spiritual book, and its premises are correct, that our only hope for a united church rests on the New Testament, and not on a modification of church orders and compromises.

It is possible that in interpreting the intercessory prayer of our Lord, "That they all may be one," he confuses unity and uniformity, for there are many who believe that the unity that our Lord prayed for was not necessarily uniformity.

Like many students who come to the study of the Word with some preconceived theory or plan, in this case a plea for church unity, his preconceptions color his exegesis, and we think this is the case in some interpretations given of the first part of the epistle.

He rightly urges the minimizing of secondary things in the different church polities, and emphasizes that these should be relegated to their proper place, but we think he falls into the mistake that he accuses others of making when he insists that in a new united church the only valid form of baptism is by immersion. On this he is insistent.—J. H. C.

The Christian Scheme.

Can We Dispense with Christianity? by F. W. Butler. George H. Doran Co., New York. 208 pages. $2 net.

Strange, even unaccountable as it may seem, in recent years both the traditional positions of Christianity and the accepted estimate of its value have been widely and seriously challenged. Mr. Butler, an English vicar of scholarly type of mind, has written for the Student Christian Movement this closely reasoned argument which aims to show the uniqueness and "absoluteness" of Christianity from the philosophic side, and to prove a help to those who, bewildered by the noisy claims of various cults or half-faiths, entertain a "lurking doubt" on that point.

Mr. Butler is not afraid of reason as (in Bosanquet's phrase) it "leads on" the reasoning being, but holds that when it comes to applying the scientific and objective attitude of mind to the study of religions, reason implies (or calls for) "the possession of the suitable principle for estimating the comparative worth of the very mixed material presented"; in other words, a

criterion of value. This criterion is afforded by the power of religions "to confirm the soul in its possession of selfhood." To be a "self" means to be committed to a constant struggle against lower influences. In all effort toward genuine self-realization there is involved "the clash of values within the soul"; yet these are not wholly subjective, but have an objective "fact-basis" in Christianity, with whose truth and meaning we must concern ourselves. Life would be irrational save as a part of some larger existence, and supreme satisfaction is experienced only in the Christian world-view which is gained by meditation upon the significance of the "organism of Christian knowledge." Philosophy is only a method, and while it is important, both philosophy and theology, it is held, rise from, and depend upon, that actual solution of the universal problem of religion which God confers in the historic work and continuous operation upon us of the spirit of Jesus Christ. The thing that is creative of Christianity both as religion and as theory is the historic and continuous act of redemption. The conclusion, then, is, that the universe is reasonable, redemption efficacious, and Christianity indispensable.—C. A. S. D.

Christian Revolution (The), by Henry T. Hodgkin. George H. Doran Co., New York. 316 pages. $2.50 net.

For ten years Mr. Hodgkin was secretary of the Friend's Foreign Mission Association of England, and at present is the secretary of the new National Christian Council of China. These facts will account for the world view which the author presents throughout this book.

It is hard to adequately appraise a work of the high character and deep significance of this book within the confines of a review.

It presents a theory of social progress for the whole world. It has two parts, I—The Principles of the Christian Revolution, II—The Application of these principles.

Under Part I there is a survey of "The World in Torment" and "The Creative Dream." The hypothesis upon which the author proceeds is that the Sermon on the Mount is not an ideal, but a divine method or program which we must work out in all parts of society. The world should be a family with God as the Father and the ruling principle of love. He maintains that the religion of Jesus has never really been tried except in rare individual cases, all of which we think is true.

In this first part the picture painted is very dark. He maintains the necessity for a complete revolution of the world order which must be Christian in its basis. He tells us "the object of the book is to lead men to think rather than supply an answer to every difficulty," and it certainly does stir thinking along the line of social progress.

The application of the principles of the Christian revolution is to the home, the school, the church, the world of industry, the world of nations,—all the activities of human life, and reveals the practically untried forces for human advancement contained in Christ's teaching.

To those who are in close touch with human nature every day, we feel that the book will seem highly idealistic, and sometimes that not enough account has been taken of the unregenerate nature of man. However, it has an optimistic note, and does believe that some progress has been made, and it properly emphasizes that any new world movement must have a spiritual basis and live in a spiritual atmosphere. The influence of the teaching and tenets of the Society of Friends is seen and felt in all the work, and its deep spiritual tone is refreshing.

It is a great book, and far in advance of most works on social progress published today. One feels that Mr. Hodgkin has gone to the heart of the matter when he emphasizes the dynamic of the life of Christ as the motive power for individual and community action. He seeks to show what Jesus really meant by the kingdom of heaven here on earth.—J. H. C.

Place of the Gospel in the Development of Humanity (The), by Benjamin J. Radford. Standard Publishing Company, Cincinnati, O. 117 pages. $1.

The writer holds that the psychological development of the individual and of the race comprises four stages. Man and the race begin by associating the phenomena of their environment according to their space relations, their size and shape. Next they classify these phenomena by their likenesses and contrasts, and then they relate them as causes and effects. In the final stage purpose and design become of more interest than questions of origin. The question of first importance then is, not how the universe was created and how it is operated, but—What is it for?

Science concerns itself only with matter. The universe is conceived as a huge factory, but science names no useful purpose for it, and no adequate market for its products.

The Bible gives answer to the question of origin: "There are diversities of operations, but it is one God that worketh all in all." The Bible will be man's guide when the question of design and purpose takes the place of the question of the origin of the universe, which now absorbs scientists, because "the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy."

The book contains a biography of the author, and a poem on "The Spiritual Man."—T. C.

Theosophy and Christian Thought, by W. S. Urquhart. Pilgrim Press, Boston. 217 pages. $2.25.

This volume, by the distinguished scholar who is professor of Philosophy in the Scottish Churches' College, Calcutta, is worth the careful attention of all who are interested in certain religious phenomena of our day.

In it theosophy is treated seriously, respectfully, and even sympathetically. Attention is called to the appeal it makes to those who have been alienated from Christianity by a narrow dogmatism, and to those who are conscious of the inadequacy of the materialistic and mechanical interpretation of the universe. Christianity is reminded that it should not leave that which it itself can supply to be provided by this fantastic and erroneous system.

For with all the author's respect for theosophy and theosophists he refuses to concede its superiority to Christianity. On the contrary, he declares that in Christ the theosophist will find that which he seeks in his strange and complicated philosophy.

It seems probable that the author must have even exercised a considerable degree of self-control in achieving so serious a treatment of what most writers on such subjects regard with but little patience. For instance, when he writes, "Madame Blavatsky, ... a woman with a varied history"; and again, when he records that "letters used to be posted in a shrine in Madame Blavatsky's house in Madras, and it was alleged that the next day answers were regularly found there, purporting to come from Koot Hoomi. It is not said where the answers were posted, and the evidence for their genuineness is far from being satisfactory. An inquiry conducted under the auspices of the Society for Psychical Research led to the conclusion that the whole theory of communications from an unseen Master was a piece of deception." It must have been a Scotch sense of humor that prompted him on a succeeding page to quote a paragraph of the teaching of the same rather dubious character, Koot Hoomi.—W. O. S.

Sermonic.

Fascination of the Unknown (The), by Thomas W. Davidson. Fleming H. Revell Co., New York. 154 pages. $1.25.

Dr. Hillis and Dr. Cadman lend the weight of their high commendation to this volume of ten sermons by a fellow Brooklyn minister.

The title is taken from the first sermon, on Joshua 3.4, "Ye have not passed this way before." The sermons are all topical, with three or four subheads. Mr. Davidson is an Irishman, and shows his training in the steeping of his thought with Scripture and in the range of his illustrations and quotations, which are from different sources from those read by an American-trained preacher.

Jack-in-the-Pulpit, by Avery A. Shaw. Judson Press, Philadelphia. 119 pages. $1 net.

One is prejudiced as he takes up a book by a friend for review. However, on this very account the reviewer is able the better to get the inner meaning of these simple talks to children. One has to know the tone of the author's voice as well as the touch of his pen to know that stories such as these went well when they were told. They are mainly stories taken from vacation experiences of the author, and from bits of poetry that he had read. They will furnish many a hint for pastors who speak to the children at the Sunday morning service.—H. P.

Learn to Live: Straight Talks, by Daniel A. Poling. Fleming H. Revell Co., New York. 208 pages. $1.50 net.

The first chapter, "Lie Down and Look Up," gets its title and suggestion from Dr. Poling's forced quiet after his bad auto accident in 1921. The last chapter, "Do the Dead Return?" grows out of the current agitation over spiritism. Between these two are 14 other addresses on practical topics, vigorous and devout in tone, and furnishing proof of Dr. Poling's popularity as a preacher to young people.

Moneyless Magnate (A), by Frederick F. Shannon. George H. Doran Co., New York. 189 pages. $1.50 net.

Dr. Shannon appears in a new vein in this volume of essays. Henry Ward Beecher and Phillips Brooks furnish the subjects for two chapters. "A Letter to 'Main Street'" and "Bryanism" are evoked by obvious recent history. Four other chapters are equally pointed, for Dr. Shannon has always something to say.

Various Themes.

Anger, by George M. Stratton. Macmillan Co., New York. 277 pages. $2.25.

A book by a trained psychologist, typical of the scientific spirit of our times. The great master emotion of anger is studied in all of its varied relations: its place in morals, in the growth and origin of religion, its future, and its proper function and true control.

In the discussion much of the new psychology is revealed. The introductory chapter is a masterpiece in this respect, as it seeks to relate the emotion of anger to the other emotions. The central interest of the book is the relation of anger to religion. The religions of the world are carefully classified into the angry, the unangry, and the religions of anger-supported love. These are discussed in great detail, revealing most painstaking research. Judaism is classed as an angry religion. Christianity and Confucianism are the two religions of anger-supported love.

Prof. Stratton is an evolutionist. Religion is assumed to be the expression of a mental attitude in man, "the utterance of his supreme fear and hate and love." Man controls and changes his religion with his own growth. The cruder forms are the more primitive. These all reveal the more angry traits, because animosity has such "a large place in man's animal and human ancestry." For this reason the question is never raised whether any truth or message was ever flashed from the unseen, whether some peoples may have lost and forgotten the message, and so have deteriorated. So when he comes to discuss the origin of monotheism, which he calls a "daring creed" in which "God finds in the human struggle with wrong enough to engage his purpose and his heart," there is no suggestion that God may have revealed himself to the Jews. Yet this is what the religion claims on every page of the record. It demands at least some consideration. Prof. Stratton, however, looking at it only from the psychologist's viewpoint finds its origin in "that peculiar fusion of anger and love which is found in marital jealousy." No evidence is offered to show that this marital jealousy was any stronger with the Jew than with other races. It seems to be universal, to say the least. With his presuppositions it is hard to account for monotheism in this one people, and only one. Prof. Stratton seizes upon the simile used by Hosea, where he likens God to a jealous husband who yearns over his people who are playing the harlot with other gods, to explain the origin of the belief in one God. He finds that "the jealous husband, with good reason or without," has a prominent place in the law, and concludes that "it cannot be doubted that the love between man and woman, in thus becoming a fiery mould of the Jews' thought of God's relation to Israel, pressed his thought straight towards the form of monotheism."

To those who like Prof. Stratton exclude the possibility of revelation this may prove to be a satisfactory account of the origin of the belief in one God, but as really accounting for the facts of Judaism and Christianity it is anything but conclusive. It leaves us cold. If religion is the expression of man's emotions, then all religions are equally true, or better, equally false. Like Pilate we can ask, "What is truth?" Truth is the ultimate that we seek. The emotional reactions of men ascribed to purely imaginary gods lead us no whither. Investigation has failed to go far enough. The final end is scepticism.

The closing chapters on the right offices of anger and rules for the fighting mood are very fine. The use of anger, and its place as a reinforcement, make anger a true servant of good will. One of the most important tasks of any man is its proper use and control.—S. C. H.

Clarion Calls from Capitol Hill, by William D. Upshaw. Fleming H. Revell Co., New York. 237 pages, with frontispiece.

Congressman Upshaw is a representative from Georgia. Previously an evangelist, we believe, he has carried his Christian convictions and courage into Congress. Twenty addresses of varying length are reprinted in this book. The topics deal with Americanism, peace, labor, prohibition and law observance, brotherhood. Two chapters are sermons.

The addresses all ring true. They are good specimens of Southern oratory, rich and racy in argument and anecdote. Taken down verbatim, punctuated with "Applause" and other remarks, they read with the freshness of the original delivery. A few poems are also given.

Critical Hours in the Preacher's Life, by Ernest Clyde Wareing. George H. Doran Co., New York. $1.25.

A surprising, unusual production, born not after months of meditation,—the usual way in which books come into being,—but in the inspiration of a day; written to meet the needs of the minister who has passed the first flush of his enthusiasm, and is faced with the intellectual, moral and spiritual difficulties of his position.

The writer is a minister of the Methodist Episcopal church, and editor of the "Western Christian Advocate." He writes with wonderful insight, with a great sympathetic touch. Multitudes of ministers fail and change their profession. This book is revealing as to the causes, suggestive as to cure.

In Part I we have a conversation vividly recorded between the author and a minister who is "in the depths" and ready to give up. Part II is a discussion of the perils of the present day ministry. Part III is another and later conversation, telling in the minister's own words of his escape from the depths. Part IV is a summary.

Only the consciousness of the personal call of God to the ministry, and a ministry that is Christ-centered, has power to endure and achieve.—S. C. H.

Highest Office (The), by Jeff D. Ray. Fleming H. Revell Co., New York. 288 pages. $2 net.

The material contained in this book might easily fulfil the author's wish and prove helpful to the "young brother," but for the minister of any experience it is too obvious to be stimulating.

The most interesting section of the book, to the reviewer, who has lived for some years in a section of the country where courtesy is at a discount, is the chapter in which Dr. Ray insists that gentlemanliness is a necessary characteristic of the Christian minister, and that the man who insists

upon observing the little courtesies of life is not thereby a snob.—W. O. S.

Long Ago in Galilee, by Muriel Clark. Carey Press, London. 101 pages, frontispiece. 2/10.

"Stories that may be True" is the subtitle, and describes the contents. The author has woven each of the 12 stories around some detail in the life of our Lord,—stories of daily experience into which our Lord enters, and with word or act as recorded in Scripture, though in different connection, brings a solution to every problem. The plot of each story reads naturally, and imagination is reverently employed.

The book is intended primarily for young people. Dr. J. Stuart Holden writes a commendatory Foreword.

Mustard Seed in Japan (A), by William Merrell Voiries. Omi Mission, Omi-Hachiman, Japan. 158 pages.

This book is correctly named. It is the study of a remarkable Christian mission in the interior of Japan which began in the consecrated life of a young American engaged to teach in a government school. His light could not be hid. From one small building the physical result is a thoroughly equipped mission plant. From days of persecution has come a strong native church. From many places have come both workers and funds for its expansion.

A heroic work is related in a telling fashion.—F. L. D.

Psychology of Power (The), by J. A. Hadfield. Macmillan Co., New York. 54 pages. 75 cents.

A meaty little book. Its author, a British officer in charge of a neurological War Hospital in Oxford, wastes few words as he deals trenchantly and scientifically with the strains and the supports characteristic of life in an age of increasing pressure, whose most significant disease is neurasthenia, or nerve fatigue. While we see men and women so ill adapted to face the demands of life that the slightest exertion produces fatigue, we are on the other hand called upon to witness exhibitions of power which fill us with wonder.

Capt. Hadfield discusses with insight and originality the mental factor in fatigue, the infirmity of the will, the instincts, confidence and faith, the expenditure of power, energy and rest, and the dynamic of religion. The four main forms of fatigue he finds to be purely physical fatigue, oversensitiveness of the mind to physical fatigue, false interpretation of mental tire as physical, and purely mental fatigue. He gives a few striking examples of the tremendous driving force of the emotions in certain crises of life, leading to Samsonian outbursts of strength or endurance which are never repeated. A sympathetic reference is made to the service (within limits) of psychotherapy, and without discussing theological doctrines the author expresses his conviction "that the Christian religion is one of the most valuable and potent influences that we possess for producing that harmony and peace of mind, and that confidence of soul, which are needed to bring health and power to a large proportion of nervous patients." In this he follows Jung, who frankly admits that religious and philosophical motive forces—the so-called metaphysical needs of the human being,—must receive positive consideration at the hands of the analyst (physician) who should make them "serve biological ends as psychologically valuable factors."

Captain Hadfield's conclusion is that we should use the powers that lie in the instincts in their cruder form, transforming where we cannot suppress, and by the aid of reason and the higher emotions, redirecting the lower instincts to nobler purposes. Thus we may press into our service the passions of the soul, "fill our sails with the very winds and gales which threaten the shipwreck of our lives," and tap the resources (including the divine supplies,) which support us under the strains of existence, and enable us to utilize the psychology of power.—C. A. S. D.

Religious Perplexities, by L. P. Jacks. George H. Doran Co., New York. 92 pages. $1 net.

The standpoint of this remarkable little book may be given in the Scripture phrase which appears on its title page: "Perplexed, yet not unto despair." Accepting religious perplexities as part of the wonder-life of man, and as facts to be explained, or at any rate held under some sort of control, Dr. Jacks tries to throw light on the purpose for which we are in the world, as existences along with God, treating in turn of "The Source of Perplexity," "Religious Perplexity in General," and "Perplexity in the Christian Religion."

He is not at all alarmed about the future of religion, nor does he try to justify all things that have been said in its defence. True religion, he thinks, does not surround the soul with "an unassailable rampart against doubt," but does bring all perplexities to a focus, concentrating them on two or three burning points, increasing the value of life by deepening its mystery. To any particular man the greatest mystery is that of his own existence, for even if the one tends to "differentiate" itself into the many, why should there be "just so many of these troublers as there are,—no more and no less," and why should you and I be among them? As for Christianity, it is "the simplest and most difficult religion in the world," yet if we can present it in less complicated forms, so avoiding the irritations and confusions arising from

irrelevances, the new difficulties which will meet us on a far higher level will introduce us to essentials, and give to strong races a battle worth fighting.

There is a breadth and inclusiveness in Dr. Jacks' statements which will not suit some readers, but his intimate discussions, phrased in clear and lucidly logical terms, will surely help the earnest soul to a more reasonable confidence in itself, as well as in God.—C. A. S. D.

Seventh Dayism X-Rayed, by Orval Leland Kelley. Standard Publishing Co., Cincinnati, Ohio. 109 pages. $1.

It is difficult to understand how anyone should want to write a book like this, and more difficult still to know why anyone should wish to write it. Where grasshoppers and Adventists really are a trouble in the land, we suppose a book like this is useful as bombs and shrapnel. The arguments of the Adventists only appeal to people of a certain state of mind. The arguments against them will have no influence on the Adventists themselves, who are adamant, but might possibly do good to silly women who are in danger of getting into it. To such we commend this volume. —H. P.

Some Living Masters of the Pulpit, by Joseph Fort Newton. George H. Doran Co., New York. 261 pages. $2 net.

Dr. Newton shows himself a master of characterization in the 15 sketches in this book. "Studies in Religious Personality," he calls them: personality expressed in the matter and manner of preaching, more especially.

The reader is charmed by the author's style and spirit, and admires his powers of observation and analysis, his versatility and catholicity. For indeed Dr. Newton has been rarely privileged by intimate contact or friendship with the subjects of his studies. On the other hand, not every one makes such good use of opportunities as he has done.

As for the separate sketches, six have overseas subjects,—Dr. Hutton, Dean Inge, Dr. Orchard, Maude Royden, Dr. Glover, and Dr. Reginald J. Campbell. Of Americans, Bishop Williams and Dr. Gunsaulus have now passed on, but Dr. George A. Gordon, Dr. Jefferson, Dr. Crothers, Dr. Cadman, Bishop Quayle, Dr. Truett and Dr. Edward L. Powell form the galaxy of brilliant preachers to whom we are introduced.

One is uplifted by the story of their (usually) helpful ministries. There will be differences regarding the estimates Dr. Newton puts upon them. The cumulative effect is to show that the art of preaching is by no means defunct, for doubtless these are only a few of the mighty men who have reached great heights in preaching the gospel.

Threshold (The), by M. W. A. Macmillan Co., New York. 239 pages. $2.

The author is ill, and considers herself on the threshold of the unseen. She meditates on life, nature, evolution and the future in the pessimistic spirit of the pagan and the agnostic.—T. C.

LATEST BOOKS RECEIVED.

Adventures in Evangelism, by Edmund Thickstun. George H. Doran Co., New York. 231 pages. $1.50 net.

Adventures in Humanity, by William L. Stidger. George H. Doran Co., New York. 255 pages. $1.50 net.

Alexander Duff, by William Paton. George H. Doran Co., New York. 240 pages. $1.50 net.

Authenticity of the Holy Scriptures (The), by H. E. Dana. George H. Doran Co., New York. 93 pages. $1 net.

Bible for School and Home (The): Vol. 5, The Gospel Story, Part I, by J. Paterson Smythe. George H. Doran Co., New York. 168 pages.

Buddhism and Buddhists in Southern Asia, by Kenneth J. Saunders. Macmillan Co., New York. 75 pages. $1.

Campbell Morgan Analyzed Bible (The). Thomas Nelson and Sons, New York. $5 and $9.

Cave Boys, by H. M. Burr. Association Press, New York. 204 pages. $1.75.

Churches of Distinction in Town and Country, by Edmund deS. Brunner. George H. Doran Co., New York. 198 pages. $1.50 net.

Church Life in the Rural South, by Edmund deS. Brunner. George H. Doran Co., New York. 117 pages.

Conflict (The), by Elizabeth Knauss. Bible Institute of Los Angeles, Los Angeles, Calif. 225 pages. $1.25.

Credo, by F. W. Aveling. Pilgrim Press, Boston. 215 pages. $2.

Crowns of Christ (The), by R. S. MacArthur. Judson Press, Philadelphia. 240 pages. $1.75 net.

Ethics of Capitalism (The), by Judson G. Rosebush. Association Press, New York. 210 pages. $1.50.

Eucharist in St. Paul (The), by Stuart L. Tyson. Macmillan Co., New York. 62 pages. 75 cents.

Fifty Short Sermons by T. DeWitt Talmage, compiled by May Talmage. George H. Doran Co., New York. 294 pages. $1.50 net.

Friend at Court (A), by Leon and Elizabeth Stern. Macmillan Co., New York. 335 pages. $2.

God's Call to America, by George Truett. George H. Doran Co., New York. 208 pages. $1.50 net.

Great Modern Sermons, edited by Hobart D. McKeehan. Fleming H. Revell Co., New York. 212 pages. $1.50 net.

Henry Martin, Confessor of the Faith, by Constance E. Padwick. George H. Doran Co., New York. 304 pages. $1.50 net.

Hidden Word (The), by Archibald King. Pilgrim Press, Boston. 151 pages. $1.25.

Jesus of Our Fathers (The), by John W. Good. Macmillan Co., New York. 842 pages. $6.

Men, Women and God, by A. Herbert Gray. George H. Doran Co., New York. 200 pages. $1.50 net.

Moral Life of the Hebrews (The), by J. M. Powis Smith. University of Chicago Press, Chicago. 337 pages. $2.25.

Mystical Quest of Christ (The), by Robert T. Horton. George H. Doran Co., New York. 317 pages. $3 net.

One Hundred Best Sermons for Special Days and Occasions, edited by G. B. F. Hallock. George H. Doran Co., New York. 552 pages. $2.50 net.

Prayer Life of Jesus (The), by M. E. Dodd. George H. Doran Co., New York. 173 pages. $1.50 net.

Problems That Perplex, by J. W. G. Ward. George H. Doran Co., New York. 213 pages. $1.50 net.

Pulpit and the Children (The), by Robert Hill. Pilgrim Press, Boston. 158 pages. $1.25.

Recent Psychology and the Christian Religion, by Cyril E. Hudson. George H. Doran Co., New York. 124 pages. 1.35 net.

Religion of the Lower Races (The), by Edwin Smith. Macmillan Co., New York. 82 pages. $1.

Religious and Social Problems of the Orient (The), by Masaharu Anesaki. Macmillan Co., New York. 77 pages. $1.

Riverside New Testament (The), translated by William G. Ballantine. Houghton Mifflin Co., Cambridge, Mass. 449 pages. $3.

Spiritual Reconstruction of the World (The), by Joel Baer Lehman. Bethany Press, St. Louis, Mo. 246 pages.

Standard of Living (The), by Newland Howland Comish. Macmillan Co., New York. 340 pages. $2.

Story of the Hymns and Tunes (The), edited by Theron Brown and Hezekiah Butterworth. George H. Doran Co., New York. 564 pages. $2.25 net.

System of Christian Evidences (A), by Leander S. Keyser. Lutheran Library Board, Burlington, Iowa. 253 pages. $1.75.

Teaching of Jesus, by Ernest D. Burton. University of Chicago Press, Chicago. 277 pages. $2.

Tested Methods in Town and Country Churches, by Edmund deS. Brunner. George H. Doran Co., New York. 173 pages. $1.25 net.

ALSO RECEIVED.

The Gospel in Numbers, by Eleanor Herr Boyd. Book Stall, 113 Fulton Street, New York. 179 pages. 50 cents.

An analysis and study of the book of Numbers from an evangelical standpoint, giving New Testament interpretations of its symbolism. Questions are appended to each chapter.

Distinctions of Truth Which Differs, by W. S. Hottel. Book Stall, 113 Fulton Street, New York. 55 pages. 25 cents.

This ambiguous title covers Scriptural studies showing the distinction between creaturehood and sonship, salvation and reward, the believer's position and walk, and several other facts and doctrines on which clear thinking is needed.

Never Man Spake Like This Man, by Philip Mauro. Hamilton Bros., Boston. 32 pages. 10 cents.

Recorded sayings of our Lord in regard to himself in relation to man, his authority and assurance, his mission and its fulfilment, etc., examined and seen to exhibit superhuman qualities that in the author's opinion are amply sufficient in character and amount to demonstrate the deity of Jesus and the authenticity of the Gospel records. Some unhackneyed arguments are plainly put forward.

Death Defeated and Defied. A Message of Comfort, Consolation and Cheer, by R. A. Torrey. Biola Book Room, Los Angeles, Cal. 46 pages. 25 cents.

A sermon preached by the author after the death of his daughter Margaret, voicing the Scriptural grounds of his own confidence and hope on the subject of death and the Christian attitude under bereavement.

What Has a Church a Right to Expect of Its Ministers, by Vernon L. Shontz. Biola Book Room, Los Angeles, Cal. 16 pages. 15 cents.

An address presented at a ministers' meeting, discussing the personality, character, message and conduct generally of a true minister of Christ.

The Menace of Morphine, Heroin, and Cocaine, by Montaville Flowers and H. R. Bonner. Narcotic Education Association, Pasadena, Cal. 47 pages. 25 cents.

A bulletin on the use of drugs, compiled by men who have specialized on that increasing menace to our land. "The Ultimate Solution" is said to lie in the education of the young, as is the case with alcohol. A "Glossary" gives the meaning of the long words used in the discussion of the drug habit.

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GREAT MEN AND WOMEN OF THE BIBLE.

International Sunday School Lessons.

August 5. Mary Magdalene.

Luke 8. 1-3; John 19. 25; 20. 11-18.

There are six Marys in the New Testament. The subject of our lesson is Mary of Magdala, a town in Galilee.

She is designated as one out of whom our Lord had driven seven demons. Demon-possession seems to have had a great revival in our Lord's time. It showed itself in various malignant ways, according to the character of the demons, but always in making the unfortunate victim a very sick person, as we would say. The first blessing that Mary owed to Jesus, then, was restored health.

There is no ground for identifying Mary of Magdala with the woman that was "a sinner" of Luke 7. 37. The Magdalene of Roman Catholic tradition and art is pious fiction dating from the 4th century. Each time Mary is mentioned she is showing love for our Lord.

On the road, Luke 8. 1-3.

Our Lord is itinerating in Galilee, and in addition to the XII he is accompanied by a group of women, among whom we first meet Mary. Their motive was gratitude for healing. Their business was ministering to the men folk out of their own means: that is, arranging for lodging, buying and preparing food, and meeting other expenses in their journeying when not entertained as guests. Mary, then, was a woman of some means, and prominent enough to be named now and later on.

How brightly the grateful actions of these women stand out against the background of our Lord's need! Who does not envy them their kindly, peculiarly womanly service?

At the cross, John 19. 25.

The disciples, all but John, have fled. Mary and the other women risked it, and at length are standing beside the cross.

It looks as if a little group of noble women had attached themselves to our Lord's party, and followed him in his fortunes (Matthew 27. 55, 56). What a privilege Mary had thus acquired, to be associated with the best men and women on earth!

At the sepulcher, John 20. 1-18.

To Mary belongs the honor of being not only first at the tomb, but also first to see and converse with the risen Lord, and to testify of him.

On finding the tomb empty she ran off to tell Peter and John, who came and investigated. Mary sobbed in her grief and loss, but presently has the privilege of an interview with the two angels. Then Jesus himself appears!

We cannot definitely explain why Mary did not recognize him. Her mind was obsessed with grief. She was not expecting to see Jesus, but rather thought of him as dead, and his body gone. Jesus may have been somewhat different in appearance and apparel.

The one word "Mary!" was enough to open her eyes. What a thrill to hear her name in the familiar tones!

"Rabboni! My Teacher!" and in this word of deepest reverence she voices her love and constancy.

We leave her with the glad testimony upon her lips, "I have seen the Lord!" No more rapturous experience can come to any believer!

August 12. Martha and Mary.

Luke 10. 38-42; Mark 14. 3-9.

To get all we may know of these sisters we must also read John 11. 1 to 12. 8, where their bearing during the sickness and reanimation of their brother Lazarus, and at the supper in honor of Jesus as told by John, sheds some light upon their characters.

It is a commonplace to say that they personify two temperaments, two types of character,—the active and aggressive, and the meditative and mystical. The differences came out in contact with our Lord, but it must not be forgotten that both sisters loved and believed in our Lord, and were loved by him (John 11. 5).

Martha, Luke 10. 38-42.

This first recorded visit of Jesus to their home becomes the occasion of a family tiff. The Greek implies that Martha was the head of the house, the house was hers. Apparently she wanted to honor her distinguished guest by a big spread, but it got on her nerves. "Cumbered" means distracted, drawn hither and thither by the preparations she was making. Mary irritated her by dropping work and seating herself at Jesus' feet. She even snapped at our Lord, and told him what to do.

Thus rudely challenged, our Lord must do something. What would be the Christ-like thing to do under such circumstances? Our Lord rebuked Martha firmly but tenderly. Perhaps he intimated that one dish (thing) would have been enough. Through over-service she was missing the opportunity of a lifetime, which Mary had been wise enough to choose.

Mary is quiet under the provocation; she just keeps still at Jesus' feet.

Mary, Mark 14. 3-9.

If Martha was more prominent in the previous passage, Mary occupies our attention here. For in John 12. 2, 3 the sisters are named. Martha is still busy, serving. Mary engages in an act of lavish personal devotion to our Lord. The ointment was worth a year's wages but she does not calculate its cost.

However, the act draws criticism upon herself again. Judas, voicing the opinion of the other men perhaps, spoke up, protesting against such "waste." As if anything done for Christ could be waste!

For the second time our Lord comes to Mary's defence and commendation. Judas' interest in the poor was a miserable excuse. Our Lord took it as a personal gift to himself; and we do not read that he was favored with many gifts. Moreover, Mary's act was prophetic, whether she was conscious of it, or not. Our Lord read into it a solemn and affecting meaning. His thoughts were far away from the supper. Mary sensed and seized an opportunity which has been given only this once, and her uncalculating love has received such unique praise as no other act in the gospel narrative.

Taking the two episodes, then, we see how Martha, with the best motives, doubtless, in honoring our Lord made herself fretful, and earned his rebuke, while Mary gained worldwide and undying admiration. We forget our Lord's condemnation when by way of compliment we refer to this age as a Martha age, both in individual life and in the church. If it is, we need to heed Mary's example. Service, activity, are all right in their way, but personal devotion to our Lord and communion with him are the essence of Christianity. Let them be combined in due proportion to obtain a balanced Christian character and life!

August 19. Stephen the Martyr.

Acts 6. 8-15; 7. 54-60.

There is no more heroic figure in the New Testament than Stephen. That he was the first martyr of the faith, that he showed such Christlike spirit even toward his murderers, invest the remembrance of him with affecting pathos. But if he was great in his death he was greater still in his LIFE. The teacher should bear this in mind, and interpret his character and teaching to the class.

Read from Acts 6. 1 to 8. 3 at a sitting.

Stephen came into prominence some three to five years after our Lord's death. A crisis in the church led to the nomination and appointment of a committee of seven for the emergency: laymen of good reputation, full of the Holy Spirit, and of wisdom. Stephen heads the list of names, and is further described as full of faith and of the Holy Spirit.

Such a man must soon graduate from serving tables, and so we come to the story of Stephen's special service.

The beginning, Acts 6. 8-15.

For the third time he is designated a "full" man, full of grace and power. Picture him, then, as a man of good reputation, of spiritual power, of gracious character, of intellectual ability. He also had power to work miracles.

Next we read that he is having hot debates with certain Jews. The subjects of debate are not told, but judging from the accusations brought against him, and from his speech before the Sanhedrin, Stephen displeased the Jews by his statement of the standing of Judaism in view of Christ's teaching and death. Evidently he echoed Christ's words about the fulfilment and passing of law and ceremonial, and the spiritual nature of true worship: the old dispensation must give way to the new.

Such talk was treason to Judaism.

The ending, Acts 7. 54-60.

Stephen's speech is the longest recorded in the book of Acts, and is notable for argumentative skill. It was a survey of Israel's history up to Solomon, showing that God had never confined himself to the Holy Land, and that Israel had always maltreated its prophets.

At verse 51 he suddenly hurls a terrible indictment at his hearers, accusing them of resisting the Holy Spirit, murdering Messiah, and disobeying the law of God. This man with the glory face blazes into a scorching arraignment of their religiosity. No wonder they are infuriated! But it is not until he speaks of seeing heaven open, and the crucified and risen Jesus standing at God's right hand, that they rush at him and drag him out to be stoned.

By a strange irony a young man present, who perhaps is supervising the stoning, is destined to become the great exponent of the very truths for which Stephen died. Stephen lived again in Paul.

The spirit of Stephen centered in his grasp of the truth as it is in Jesus. The conditions he faced can never be repeated, but workers among orthodox Jews have something of the same problem. The church needs men of Stephen's type and character today, full of grace and of the Holy Spirit, loyal to truth, fearless in testimony, direct in application, serene in opposition, even in the face of death.

August 26. Barnabas the Great-Hearted.

Acts 4. 36, 37; 11. 19-30.

The Christian fellowship has been growing literally by thousands. As in Jewry and heathen lands today, doubtless, expulsion of converts from their homes ensued, with consequent need. Believers therefore kept together, and shared their possessions with the needy.

Among those who pooled their property one man is named,—Joseph of Cyprus, better known by the name given him by the apostles, Barnabas, "son of consolation" or "exhortation."

No man except Paul outside the original apostolic band was so influential and helpful in those early years as Barnabas: hence his place in the New Testament Hall of Fame. He is named in connection with some seven incidents, with a few further mere references. Nothing is told of his antecedents or conversion to Christ, but from these incidents we can make a composite picture of his personality and service.

A good man, and full of the Holy Spirit and faith, Acts 11. 24.

What a comprehensive tribute is implied in these words!

A "good" man, kindly, brotherly, self-sacrificing, free from jealousy and self-seeking, conciliatory, always devoted to the cause: these are some of the elements of goodness that are to be seen in his character and actions.

"Full of the Holy Spirit and of faith." Barnabas was not so much a theologian as a man whose spiritual character was shown in his acts. He was always doing something nice for others.

A generous man.

He showed largeness of heart and mind, being generous with his wealth and generous in his judgments of people.

When Saul came back to Jerusalem the first time after his conversion it was Barnabas who extended the hand of fellowship to him, and (shall we say?) saved him to the church (Acts 9. 26-30).

When conversions at Antioch raised questions in the minds of the apostles at Jerusalem, they sent Barnabas to investigate. What will he report? His decision will be momentous! Instead of showing a narrow, critical, sectarian spirit, he saw the grace of God in these unusual circumstances, and rejoiced, and encouraged the converts to be genuine and whole-hearted (Acts 11. 22, 23).

Further, seeing that the large number of converts needed instruction, he went off to Tarsus to get Saul for this important work (Acts 11. 24-26). May we say that he thus saved Saul to the Christian ministry? He showed true discernment of Saul's latent ability.

When Paul refused to take Mark as associate on the second missionary journey, Barnabas decided to give him a second chance even though it meant separation from Paul (Acts 15. 35-41). Results justified his generous confidence.

A successful leader.

Barnabas was a successful leader in the forward movements of the early church.

The visit to Antioch let him in on the first purely Gentile advance of the gospel.

With Paul he was first to be officially sent forth by the church on a missionary tour (Acts 13 and 14).

Together they withstood the Judaizing party that came to Antioch: out of which clash came the first church council, where their testimony regarding Gentile converts won the support of the council (Acts 15).

SELECTED THOUGHTS FOR THE QUIET HOUR.

(*Learn a Text a Day.*)

AUGUST, 1923.

WEDNESDAY, 1st. *I am crucified with Christ. Nevertheless I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me. Galatians 2. 20.*

CHRIST, only CHRIST,
No idle word e'er falling!
CHRIST, only CHRIST,
No needless, bustling sound!
CHRIST, only CHRIST,
No self-important bearing!
CHRIST, only CHRIST,
No trace of "I" be found!

THURSDAY, 2nd. *I will pour water on him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground. Isaiah 44. 3.*

Two forms of the Spirit's operations are here set forth, the ordinary and the extraordinary. These floods represent the occasional outpouring of the Spirit of God in seasons of great revival. Let us pray for and earnestly expect such a mighty outpouring of the Holy Spirit in our day! —A. B. Simpson.

FRIDAY, 3rd. *I love them that love me, and those that seek me early shall find me. Proverbs 8. 17.*

Give God the blossom of your life! Put him not off with the fallen leaves!—Nicholls.

SATURDAY, 4th. *My meditation of him shall be sweet; I will be glad in the Lord. Psalm 104. 34.*

Resolve that, cost what it may, you will have a quiet time alone with God, and that the art of meditation shall be exercised and mastered!—Mark Guy Pearse.

SUNDAY, 5th. *They have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid him. John 20. 13.*

There are people who would rather have a dead Christ in their own sect than a living Saviour outside their own approved boundaries. Many are talking about Christ as if he were absent. At the very moment when Mary was complaining, the Lord himself was looking at her and listening to her. Look for Christ everywhere,—in the church, in the garden, in childhood, in the place of graves, in the opening and ever-shining heaven!—Joseph Parker.

MONDAY, 6th. *Hatred stirreth up strifes, but love covereth all sins. Proverbs 10. 12.*

Speak gently! It is better far
To rule by love than fear.
Speak gently! Let no harsh words mar
The good we might do here.
—Bates.

TUESDAY, 7th. *And he looked up and said, I see men as trees walking. Mark 8. 24.*

The record of the social and moral progress of the race since the advent of the Redeemer is largely an expansion of the Bethsaida episode. The touch of Jesus has given to self-contained and self-interested souls a vision of others.—Henry Sloane Coffin.

WEDNESDAY, 8th. *I have chosen thee in the furnace of affliction. Isaiah 48. 10.*

It is a great help when passing through the fire to know that we are there because there is gold to be extracted or silver to be refined as well as dross to purge away.—D. W. Whittle.

THURSDAY, 9th. *Pray without ceasing. 1 Thessalonians 5. 17.*

Only begin to pray, really to pray, and you will become so enraptured with your own experiences and your own attainments in prayer that you will never stop!—Alexander Whyte.

FRIDAY, 10th. *I will instruct thee and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go. Psalm 32. 8.*

Let us, then, take all our perplexities to God! Leave not thy chamber this morning without inquiring of the Lord!—C. H. Spurgeon.

SATURDAY, 11th. *This is the will of God, even your sanctification. 1 Thessalonians 4. 3.*

Happy the man who finds out the will of God, and blessed the man who does it! We are not left in doubt here. The words are unmistakable that God wills our sanctification.—B. Carradine.

SUNDAY, 12th. *And Moses said unto the people, Fear ye not! Stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord, which he will show to you today! Exodus 14. 13.*

There are always people in our churches who are very much delighted at what the Lord said to Moses standing there on the banks of the Red Sea. They would have liked it a great deal better if he had said, "Sit down"; that is the only fault that they have to find with that text.—Len G. Broughton.

MONDAY, 13th. *It is an honor for a man to cease from strife, but every fool will be meddling. Proverbs 20. 3.*

When a quarrel is started, words feed the flame, and it is hard to stop. Honor lies not in triumph, but in self-control.

TUESDAY, 14th. *When he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth. John 16. 13.*

No mere critic can understand the Bible. No word-chopper can preach the Bible. No murderous grammarian that thinks by taking off letter by letter he can get at the meaning will ever reach the genius of any revelation given from the heavens.—Joseph Parker.

WEDNESDAY, 15th. *They that wait upon the Lord . . . . shall mount up with wings as eagles. Isaiah 40. 31.*

Have you ever mounted up with wings as eagles and looked upon your daily work? You will be amazed to see what dignity common labor assumes, even clothing itself in the sanctity of a means of grace. And have you ever taken the eagle's wings and looked down upon your sorrows? You will be amazed to see how the wilderness begins to blossom like the rose when you see it in relation to the blessed Paradise of God. And so it is with everything when we get away up where the eagles' wings can lift us.—J. H. Jowett.

THURSDAY, 16th. *But the end of all things is at hand; be ye therefore sober and watch unto prayer. 1 Peter 4. 7.*

If we believe in the imminency of our Lord's coming we shall be much in prayer.

FRIDAY, 17th. *My God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus. Philippians 4. 19.*

Worry is not faith. It is doubting God, who has promised to supply all our need in Christ Jesus.

SATURDAY, 18th. *The steps of a good man are ordered of the Lord, and he delighteth in his way. Psalm 37. 23.*

We must mark God's providence leading us, and if providence tarries, tarry till providence comes. He who goes before providence will be very glad to run back again.—C. H. Spurgeon.

SUNDAY, 19th. *The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin. 1 John 1. 7.*

Have we outlived the efficacy of the blood of Christ, and is the tale of his cross a sound from which all the music has gone forever? We need the sun today, as we have ever needed it. The wind is still the breath of health to our dying bodies. Still we find in the earth the bread without which we cannot live. These are our friends, of whom we never tire. Can it be that the only thing of which we are weary is God's answer to our soul's deepest need? Shall we keep everything but the blood of Christ?—Joseph Parker.

MONDAY, 20th. *Lord, when saw we thee an hungred? Matthew 25. 37.*

Deeds have results that are surprising. Let us be sure that our deeds are kindly, and the surprise of their effects will be pleasant!

TUESDAY, 21st. *Let not thine heart envy sinners, but be thou in the fear of the Lord all the day long. Proverbs 23. 17.*

Holy thoughts in the heart have also a transfiguring influence on the life.—J. R. Miller.

WEDNESDAY, 22nd. *If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me. Psalm 66. 18.*

Unconfessed and unjudged sin is one of the chief causes of unanswered prayer—Alexander Marshall.

THURSDAY, 23rd. *I sought the Lord, and he heard me, and delivered me from all my fears! Psalm 34. 4.*

Prayer makes for overflowing happiness, for deep and humble gratitude, because of what God does for one.

FRIDAY, 24th. *Be not deceived, God is not mocked! Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. Galatians 6. 7.*

Others also reap what we sow, both good and bad.

SATURDAY, 25th. *If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit. Galatians 5. 25.*

To live in the Spirit is to receive the quickening life of the Holy Spirit in our physical being, and to find in him the source of constant stimulus and strength for all the faculties of our mind and all the functions of our body.—A. B. Simpson.

SUNDAY, 26th. *Take heed lest by any means this liberty of yours become a stumbling block to them that are weak. 1 Corinthians 8. 9.*

I believe more people stumble over the inconsistencies of professed Christians than from any other cause. What is doing more harm to the cause of Christ than all the scepticism in the world is this cold, dead formalism, this conformity to the world, this professing what we do not possess.—D. L. Moody.

MONDAY, 27th. *Who is among you that . . . . walketh in darkness and hath no light? Let him trust in the name of the Lord and stay upon his God. Isaiah 50. 10.*

Ah, soul, it may have to come to the worst with thee ere thou art delivered, but thou wilt be! God may keep thee waiting, but he will ever be mindful of his covenant, and will appear to fulfill his inviolable word.—F. B. Meyer.

TUESDAY, 28th. *He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee but to do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God? Micah 6. 8.*

We shall not even begin to do justly by others until we love mercy,—without which we are harsh,—and walk humbly with God.

WEDNESDAY, 29th. *Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled! Matthew 5. 6.*

According to these words of Christ it is blessed even to yearn after righteousness. The filling will come, but it is blessed to want it.

THURSDAY, 30th. *They shall sing in the ways of the Lord. Psalm 138. 5.*

The time when Christians begin to sing in the ways of the Lord is when they first lose their burden at the foot of the cross. Not even the songs of the angels seem so sweet as the first song of rapture which gushes from the inmost soul of the forgiven child of God.—C. H. Spurgeon.

FRIDAY, 31st. *We all do fade as a leaf. Isaiah 64. 6.*

Change and decay in all around I see:
So runs forever Earth's long mournful story;
But God's own gift forever sets us free,
A present Saviour and a coming glory!

—Handley C. G. Moule.

Next Month.

The reports of addresses given at the Northfield Young Women's Conference begin in next month's issue.

The October issue will be a double number as usual, with over 80 pages of conference reports. (Price for a single copy 40 cents.)

November is devoted to mission addresses, on work at home and abroad, and reports will be continued every month throughout the year. Better subscribe by the year, and get monthly messages from the Northfield platform!

ILLUSTRATIVE HINTS AND HELPS

ON THE CHRISTIAN ENDEAVOR TOPICS.

Mrs. Ida Q. Moulton.

Lessons from the Psalms: A Nature Psalm.

Psalm 104. 1-35. August 5.

What a lesson of comfort and cheer comes to us through the silent, unseen, mysterious forces of nature as they ceaselessly weave the garment of God! But the activities of nature's forces upon earth, sky and water are no more wonderful than the unseen forces acting upon the formation of character. There is this difference between them, however: nature must submit to the one class, and make the best of them, while man has the power of choice,—and God, who is an ever-present help in time of need.

* * * * *

God laid the beams of his chambers in the waters (3). It is only by obeying the laws of the sea that man can sail upon its waters, and obedience is the relationship of God's will to us upon the sea of life.

Dr. J. T. Faris once said, should I desire to set a task that cannot be performed I think I would say, Write a description of the Grand Cañon of Colorado, God's autograph in stone, so like life, "a paradox of chaos and repose, of gloom and radiance, of immeasurable desolation and enthralling beauty. It is a despair and a joy, a woe and an ecstasy, a requiem and a hallelujah, a world-ruin and a world-joy!"

Whether we gaze with the most powerful lens upon the order and beauty of the heavens, or with a microscope upon the wings of the tiniest flying thing, we see evidences of God's love for order, beauty and thoroughness, and how in wisdom he made them all (24).

* * * * *

Horticulturists tell us that nearly every activity of nature is engaged in some manner in the dispersal of seeds.

A loving deed is a living seed
Which finds full fruitage never;
Its tree doth grow through calm and blow,
And blooms and yields forever!

God of the snow, teach me
That though my sins as red as crimson be,
Yet, through the precious blood that cleanses me,
They shall be even whiter than the snow!

God of the trees,
Give me the dance of their boughs
Whenever the wild wind blows;
And when the wind is gone, give me
Their beautiful repose!

God of the roadside weed,
Grant I may humbly serve the humblest need!

God of the scarlet rose,
Give me the beauty that thy love bestows!

What Can Be Done Toward Abolishing Poverty?

Luke 16. 19-30. August 12.

Where would gaunt poverty be if every able-bodied man should awake each morning with the refrain of the following workman's song in his heart?

Praise God! Praise God! Give me my tools again!
Oh, let me grasp a hammer and a saw!
Bring me a nail, and any piece of wood!
Come, see me shut my hand and open it,
And watch my nimble fingers twirl a ring!
How good are solids,—oak, and stone, and iron,
And rough and smooth, and straight and curved and round!
I am a man again, a man for work,
A man for earning bread and clothes and home;
A man, and not a useless hold-the-hand;
A man, no more a bandaged cumberer.

* * * * *

The following statement of Mr. Borah has never been contradicted:

"We shall expend this year, Mr. President, for war purposes, $2,650,000,000; for agriculture, $24,876,000; for the public health, $15,877,000; for promotion of education, $10,151,000; for labor interests, $4,718,000; to study the causes of and the remedy for war, not one cent."

Billions to make poverty, as war always does, and only millions to abolish it, as agriculture, sanitation, education, and adjustment of labor interests are sure to do!

* * * * *

When a Cherokee chief was asked why his tribe was so much in advance of others he replied:

"Because we have taken care to educate our women as well as our men."

A high caste Hindu said: "We must educate our women. No nation can rise above its womanhood."

Robert Treat Paine places the home first among the causes of pauperism. There has recently been established in one of our cities a school which teaches the art of housekeeping. The old saying, "A woman can throw out of a home with a teaspoon as fast as man can throw in with a shovel," is yet true in many cases.

How to Get On in Life.

Deuteronomy 8. 1-18. August 19.

Admiral Farragut, he of the "true heart and iron will," said to another officer of the navy:

"Dupont, do you know why you didn't get into Charleston with your ironclads?"

"Oh yes, the channel was so crooked!"

"No, it was not that."

"Well, the rebel fire was perfectly terrible."

"Yes, but it was not that."

"What was it then?" asked Dupont, a little nettled.

"It was because you did not believe you could go in."

He who doubts is lost. "He who moves forward wins," said Marshal Foch, whose life motto is, "Fear God, and have no other fear."

* * * * *

An influential business man in South America said to a traveler: "It is sad, indeed sad, to see our people so miserable and unhappy when they might be prosperous and happy. Their stunted minds, their ills of body, their inability to get on in life, spring from one source, lack of religion."

Religion pure and undefiled makes for happiness and prosperity, makes life worthwhile, and leads to success. The end and purpose of religion, however, are not in making things that insure a decent living, but rather things that make a decent, well ordered, God-fearing life.

* * * * *

The story is told of a small girl, who, being left to keep house by herself for several hours, attempted to prove her efficiency by undertaking tasks beyond her strength and knowledge. She could not reach the upper shelves to which she ambitiously aspired. The step-ladder slipped, her pail of water upset, and a drenched and bumped little girl was the result. She immediately wrote in her diary:

"Resolved, to try to be just common good. The things you can do turn out better than the things you can't do."

"Whatever you are by nature," says a recent writer, "keep to it! Never desert your own line of talent! Be what nature intended you to be, and you will succeed!"

* * * * *

James Hill said, in substance: "The test of success or failure is found in the answer to this question, Are you able to save money?"

However, there is all the difference in the world between thrift and greed.

Dr. Parkhurst has said: "The best thing that can befall a child is that he be conscious of authority."

Since material success is often so closely allied to spiritual success, and obedience is the organ of all spiritual knowledge, why not begin our life careers by literally obeying God's commands?

Lessons in the School of Prayer.

Matthew 18. 19, 20; 21. 18-22. August 26.

God counteth not our prayers, nor analyzes their construction, nor considereth their length, nor listeneth for their rhythm, but he does attend unto their heart throbs.

Blessed is the man who has learned to save time for prayer! Martin Luther was right when he said:

"I have so much to do today I must spend much time in prayer.

The devil will do his best to help you to set up machinery in your church if you only leave out the greatest and best machine of all, prayer.

We must learn to do as well as to pray. "Thy will be done" is not a prayer of resignation only. Something is to be done. It calls for action, not passivity. God's will is to be done by men.—J. R. Miller.

* * * * *

No answer comes to those that pray, and idly stand
And wait for stones to roll away at God's command;
He will not break the binding cords upon us laid
If we depend on pleading words, and will not aid.

* * * * *

A young bride, who was about to entertain some friends, went to a neighbor to borrow a few things she needed.

"Is that all you want?" asked the generous neighbor.

"Yes, I think so," replied the bride.

"But you will need this, and that, and the other," said the experienced woman, naming the articles.

"I was so thankful afterwards," said the young hostess, "that I went to some one who knew just exactly what I needed better than I did myself, and was willing to supply it."

And so we need to learn that God knows just exactly what we need better than we do ourselves. This is a hard lesson, when we are so sure of just what we need.

* * * * *

We should learn definiteness in prayer.

If you seek an audience with the president of the United States you settle beforehand just what you want to ask him.

An eminent Bible student says that of 70 definite prayers recorded in the Old Testament all were answered save one; 66 out of 69 were answered just as asked, the very thing desired was granted, and in the other three cases the prayers were answered in a better way.

BIBLE NOTES FOR DAILY DEVOTIONS.

LEAVES FROM AN INTERPRETER'S NOTEBOOK.

Rev. John Gardner, D. D.

AUGUST, 1923.

Wednesday, 1st. Ezra 7. 1-10.

Nearly sixty years have elapsed since the incidents recorded in the previous chapter and the arrival of Ezra. They are silent years. What happened to Zerubbabel we do not know. That about which we are most solicitous, the welfare of Jerusalem, is unrecorded. We can only guess from references to conditions in the book of Nehemiah that the early glow of piety had cooled, and many were becoming materialistic and worldly in attitude of mind.

He is introduced to us as a ready scribe. Originally the word scribe denoted a royal official, a secretary. Curtis says, "The royal scribe's business was to write a report of the historical events as they occurred, and to inscribe the king's edicts. The idea of the word became then essentially 'a writer.' The term applied to Ezra does not imply primarily that he was learned in the law, but that he was an expert with the pen, writing or copying the law. Inevitably the scribes became learned in the law. The adjective 'ready' or 'quick' shows the true idea."

The phrase "Ezra the scribe" shows that he was a leader. As Ryle says, "he was the typical representative and in a measure the founder of the later type of scribes. Devoted to the minute study of the written law, he sought to expound it to his people and to impress upon them the duty of its rigid observance." He differs from Curtis in thinking that a ready scribe refers to the dexterity of his erudition, not of his pen.

Ezra regarded the law with reverence. This was the basis of his work. So often a man loses his sense of the sacredness of that with which he is dealing. It is possible for the Bible student, for the preacher, as for the priest, to become possessed of a profane mind. Every man of God knows the danger. Ezra never fell into it. His work was carried on under a sense of a high and holy duty.

O God, teach us thy holiness! Open our eyes to behold thy majesty, thy purity! If the sinless hosts of heaven veil their faces as they stand before thee, we sinful mortals must stand in awe of thee. Have mercy upon us, and cleanse our lips! So help us to tell thy will to others! Amen.

Thursday, 2nd. Ezra 7. 11-26.

Ezra appears as a man of single purpose. He has set his heart upon a great achievement. He has determined not only to know the letter of the law, but to discover its meaning, to take it as the one only standard of his life. He becomes a man of one idea, of a single consecration. He will not teach until he understands, but as he discovers the significance of things he will make all Israel understand also. He believes that the law is an embodiment of true principles of living, and when he has discovered them he will make them known by precept and example. "Ezra's purpose to search for truth, to live by it, and to teach it to his countrymen is an epitome of an ideal scribe's career."

What is the difference between statutes and judgments? Ryle says, "Statutes are the appointed rules or regulations of conduct or ceremony, judgments are the duties and rights determined by equity, authority or custom."

There were three Persian kings bearing the names of Artaxerxes. This king seems to have been Artaxerxes Longimanus, (i.e., of the long hand), son of Xerxes. He was a boy when he became king, and this edict was one of his earliest and most generous acts.

Adeney says: "This edict of Longimanus goes beyond its predecessors in favoring the Jews, especially with regard to their religion. It is directly and personally addressed to Ezra, whom the king may have known as an earnest and zealous leader of the Hebrew community at Babylon, and through him it grants to all Jewish exiles who wish to go up to Jerusalem liberty to return to the homes of their fathers. It may be objected that after the decreee of Cyrus any such fresh sanction should not have been needed. But two generations had passed away since the pilgrimage of the first body of returning captives, and during this long time many things had happened to check the free action of the Jews, and to cast reproach upon their movements. For a great expedition to start now without any orders from the reigning monarch might excite his displeasure, and a subject people who were dependent for their very existence upon the good will of an absolute sovereign would naturally hesitate before they ventured to rouse his suspicions by undertaking any considerable migration on their own account."

O God, we thank thee for the influence of thy word! We thank thee for the converting, enlightening, strengthening power of

thy law. We pray thee that we may learn to test our lives by its precepts, and to seek to live in its light. Amen.

Friday, 3rd. Ezra 7. 27 to 8. 20.

These are the first words recorded as being Ezra's. It is interesting to notice that he begins with a thanksgiving to God. His prayer is that of a patriot. He does not exalt his own experience as a thing apart. The blessings which fill him with joy are blessings shared with others. God's favor is toward all his people. Moreover, his interest is in his church rather than in himself and his own home. He had experienced the lovingkindness of God in the success of his appeal to the king and his seven councillors. Not only had he been able to plead effectively with king and court, but the people of his own nation, and particularly the laity, had stood by him and undertaken the long and arduous journey in his company.

We do not know the precise location of Ahava. Ryle says, "It is hardly likely that this first review would be held at a great distance from Babylon, where the great majority of the Jews were settled. On the other hand, it is equally unlikely that a gathering of 1500 men and of a caravan which must have comprised 7000 or 8000 souls would have met within the walls of Babylon. The conjecture, therefore, that the Ahava was one of the many canals or artificial rivers in the vicinity of Babylon appears to be the most probable."

How much depends upon the intellectual and moral qualities of those who are chosen to lead great enterprizes! No wonder the Pilgrim Fathers were exhorted "to have respect to the spirit of their leaders." Ezra shows his qualifications for leadership in that those whom he chose were understanding men who had the ability to instill into those under them a sound knowledge of what makes a strong, united people. Intelligence combined with the ability to instruct others is not only a requisite of right leadership in civil administration, but in the house of God. Ezra believes in an educated ministry,—and that does not mean mere acquaintance with the letter of the law, but sound discretion in administering the affairs of the church, and in dealing with the individuals committed to their care.

Our Father, grant that our characters may adorn the gospel! Give us a knowledge of thy will, and ability to impart that knowledge to others! Restrain us from embarking on policies that are not to the glory of thy name! Help us to serve thy cause! For Christ's sake. Amen.

Saturday, 4th. Ezra 8. 21-36.

Ryle says: "The fast is not proclaimed in connexion with any special commission of sin. Ezra appoints the fast (a) as the symbol of submission before God's will and of repentance for sin, (b) as the means of intensifying religious fervor in prayer through the restraint laid upon physical appetite, (c) as the testimony that man lives not by bread alone. Viewed in this aspect, the public fast proclaimed by Ezra was a spiritual exercise from which the pagan notion of propitiating God's favor by voluntary human suffering was altogether absent."

It was in this sense, because of its moral and spiritual discipline, and not because of anything physical, that Jesus made reference to fasting when he explained the impotence of the disciples in the presence of clamant human need, "These things are not accomplished except through prayer and fasting." Such prayer and fasting would remove difficulties from the pathway of the pilgrims. Ezra might secure safety by seeking a bodyguard of soldiers, or he might have Jehovah as his shield and defence, and he was ashamed to think of any alternative to God's protecting and directing care.

Ezra then commits the gifts of the king and other patrons and friends of the movement into the hands of consecrated men, charging them to exercise vigilance and to regard their trust as a challenge to their sanctity. A holy man will treat the Lord's business as a solemn and sacred trust to be guarded with his life.

Adeney says: "Ezra's first thought was to ask for an escort, but he tells us he was ashamed to do so, as this would imply distrust in God. Whatever we may think of his logic, we must be struck by his splendid faith, and the loyalty which would run a great risk rather than suffer what might seem like dishonor to his God. Here was one of God's heroes. We cannot but connect the preliminary fast with this courageous attitude of Ezra's. So in tales of chivalry we read how knights were braced by prayer and fast and vigil to enter the most terrible conflicts with talismans of victory. In an age of rushing activity it is hard to find the hidden springs of strength in their calm retreats. The glare of publicity starts us on the wrong track by tempting us to advertise our own excellencies, instead of abasing ourselves in the dust before God. Yet is it not now as true as ever that no boasted might of man can be in any way comparable to the divine strength which takes possession of those who completely surrender their wills to God? Happy are they who have the grace to walk in the valley of humiliation, for this leads to the armory of supernatural power!"

O Lord, we would that our lives might become so fragrant through the indwelling of thy Spirit that men might be attracted through them to the love and service of our Redeemer! Amen.

Sunday, 5th. Ezra 9.

In these days of moral laxity we are wont to criticize the narrowness and bigotry of men

of the Ezra type. We even venture to brand such men as Pharisees. But when we consider the number of broken hearthstones in our land, we are compelled to ask whether there is not something wrong in our indifference to intellectual, moral and spiritual problems in connection with marriage. Is it safe to leave the matter to sex attraction?

Israel learned her lessons slowly. In the early days marriage was forbidden with Canaanites, but not with other people. So Boaz married a Moabitess, David an Ammonitess, Solomon an Egyptian, Ahab a Phœnician. Apparently such marriages provoked no censure. Yet they brought misery in their time. Now there were but few left of a once honored and glorious nation. How were they to preserve their identity, how restore their ideals? The Pilgrim Fathers forsook Holland largely because of this problem. So Ezra felt that at all hazards he must guard the life of his people. They had gone forth on their pilgrimage under the patronage of the Persian king, but they were not a nation of serfs. Let them learn the lesson that the hearthstone and the altar are the basis of the state! Let them learn that a marriage of incompatibles is impossible! Let them learn to control their affections by reason and piety! Love is not to be confused with mere sex attraction. Love is spiritual, love feeds on the bread of heaven. We need to cultivate such ideas today.

O Lord God, we pray that we may learn to control our affections and desires! May we love those who love thee! Bless thou our homes, and grant that in them we may honor thee! Strengthen us by thy grace, that we may live separate from the world! Amen.

Monday 6th. Ezra 10. 1-19.

Ezra must have been a remarkable man to have exerted so extraordinary an influence over the people, both laymen and priests. While the multitudes were assembling Ezra was praying. The tidings of his grief, his determination that wrong things should be put right, spread from mouth to mouth until at last the whole assembly was wrought up to a pitch of emotion and resolution which led them to vow a complete reorganization of family life. We recoil from the issues involved. We say that the wrong had been perpetrated already, women had become mothers, and whatever their origin they had certain inalienable rights. Ezra was a man of one idea. Everything,—home, love, parental obligation,—must be subordinated to that for which nation and church were created.

Witton Davies says: "To most readers it will appear cruelly immoral and irreligious to require the abandonment of wives that were not of Jewish descent, and of the children begotten by them. (Verse 44 favors the idea that in most cases the children were not put away.) How different Paul's teaching regarding mixed marriages! But one has to bear in mind the peculiar circumstances and the dominating ideas of the day. The ancients did not attach to marriage the sanctity and binding force with which Christian nations have invested it, so that the separation of married persons was much easier and more frequent. Purity of racial blood was always, and especially at the time in question, a matter of supreme moment. The nation was believed, as such, to have been selected to be the world's teacher. For this it was to keep itself apart from other nations. The idea of national and ceremonial purity was now particularly deep in the national consciousness."

Our God and Father, we thank thee that we have seen the day of Christ, and have learned that all nations are dear to thee! Forgive us if we have put false limits on thy gracious will! Help us to learn the more excellent way! In Christ's name. Amen.

NEHEMIAH.

Tuesday, 7th. Nehemiah 1. 1-3.

Some ten or twelve years have elapsed since the concluding chapter of Ezra. That chapter told of a far reaching social upheaval. What happened afterwards? We lose sight of Ezra until we come to Nehemiah 8 to 10. Tradition says that he died in Jerusalem in the midst of the achievements of his career, and respected by the people.

Nehemiah's story opens in 445 B. C. During those years the Jews set about rebuilding the walls of Jerusalem. This roused the Samaritans once more, and they began to spread reports of disloyalty. It was this condition of affairs which was reported by Hanani and his companions, and roused the emotions of Nehemiah. What follows is a history of Nehemiah, for that is what we are to understand by the words of Nehemiah.

We know nothing of Nehemiah's family except that his father's name was Hachaliah, and that as his brother Hanani was appointed among the Levites, he may have belonged to the tribe of Levi.

The tidings reached Nehemiah in November. He was a cup-bearer to King Artaxerxes in Susa, one of the mightiest cities of ancient times. His duty would indicate that he held a position of servitude. His magnificent appearance, combined with his character and intellectual power, marked him out as a man worthy of the king's regard.

Adeney points out the influence of the exiles on Jewish history. "Like Ezra, the younger man whose practical energy and high authority were to further the reforms of the somewhat doctrinaire scribe, was a Jew of the exile. Once more it is in the East, far away from Jerusalem, that the

impulse is found for furthering the cause of the Jews. Thus we are again reminded that wave after wave sweeps up from the Babylonian plains to give life and strength to the religious and civic restoration."

It is evident that Nehemiah was sought out by the messengers. They recognized that he was a key man. It is a lesson to be learned by young men. In the long run success does not come because we blow our own horn. Success comes because we are men of integrity, men of initiative, men of religious faith. For a period we may seem to be obscure, but ultimately men will need us, and their need creates our opportunity. Our very desirabilities become the secret of our strength.

We thank thee, O Father, for those whom thou hast inspired to do thy work, and to go to the rescue of those who seem incapable of helping themselves! Help us to realize the needs of others, and to find our happiness in going to their aid! Amen.

Wednesday, 8th. Nehemiah 1. 4-11.

There is no more certain test of a man than his reaction to the story of social and religious calamity. If he holds himself aloof from the matter, merely remarking on its sadness, but recognizing no personal responsibility or challenge, there is a lack of spiritual sensitiveness.

Nehemiah was not that type of man. He was a truly religious man, and therefore a patriot. The tidings concerning Jerusalem affected him as though they related to a personal calamity. He wept, fasted, prayed; he felt a personal responsibility for conditions prevailing far away. And it is really true that we are involved in the condition of the church of God in every place. If all is well in London and Berlin, all is likely to become well in New York and San Francisco.

Nehemiah's prayer reveals an enlarged and intelligent conception of God. He realizes the divine majesty and compassion, the divine power and constancy, the divine forgiveness and will to redeem. It shows the urgency of supplication. Nehemiah not only tells Jehovah the burden of his grief, but comes to him with a sense of emergency: help is needed, needed now; omnipotent help, such as Jehovah possesses. Nehemiah believes in the divine integrity. Jehovah who convenanted with Israel cannot be unfaithful. He recognizes, however, that God's mercy is dependent on human conditions.

Nehemiah realizes that the present condition is the consequence of sin. He does not speak as though it was some one else's sin. He is a true intercessor in that he accepts personal responsibility for national sin. This is a point that we frequently overlook. We talk of the sins of the people as though we were not the people. You and I, the families to which we belong, are sharers in America's guilt. If we were better, the nation would be better.

Nehemiah recognizes that the key to peace and prosperity lies in the return of the people to right ways of living. The nation had taken a wrong turn. His confession leads to consecration. The nation must turn back, and he would lead the way. In this act of consecration he claims the divine coöperation. He will go forth to lead his people now, but let Jehovah exert his power to prosper the undertaking.

It is a great prayer, and a model for all who seek a revival of religion.

Our Father, we thank thee for the privilege of prayer! We ask that we may be taught how to pray. Teach us to be unselfish in prayer! May the story of our brother's need inspire us to seek thy aid in delivering him! Amen.

Thursday, 9th. Nehemiah 2. 1-11.

Prayer leads to action. In the springtime of the year 445 B. C. Nehemiah is serving the king with wine. Persian kings either dined alone, or permitted their favorite wives and two or three children to dine with them, or a few invited guests. The cup-bearer must come to his task cheerfully, and Nehemiah had won the king's favor largely because of the manner in which he had rendered service. Efficiency is not enough; spirit is essential to success. On this day, however, Nehemiah appears as a man with a burdened heart, and the king's heart turns to him with sympathetic inquiry.

Nehemiah was laboring under strong emotion. He was apprehensive of failure. If he proved a bad advocate he might jeopardize his people's cause, and even arouse suspicion enough to forfeit his life. He met the king's question in a manner to command respect. Why should a man hide his love of country because his country has been conquered? Men respect an honest-hearted patriot. Nehemiah has never been lacking in devotion to his master, and yet he has always remained loyal in heart to the land of his fathers.

When the king asked what his request may be, Nehemiah is not ready with a prepared answer. He takes each step in partnership with heaven. Would that we were more in the habit of offering ejaculatory prayers in the midst of our business conferences! Then the request was made, respectfully, with becoming recognition of the king's authority and deference to the king's policy. The city is in the king's domains, yet it is the city in which the hallowed dust of Nehemiah's ancestors lies buried.

Nehemiah is definite with his request. He states frankly his desire to rebuild the city. Man gains more by courteous, honest-hearted frankness than by sophistry. The king creates Nehemiah governor of Jerusalem for a period of years. Whether there

was an extension of time, or he returned to Susa and obtained a renewal of his commission, we do not know, but at any rate the period covered was about twelve years.

Equipped with adequate powers and resources, the brave man was ready for his journey. It was well that he had such commission and patronage, for there were powerful forces at work to defeat the efforts of those who would reëstablish the people of God in the city of God. But he who orders his life in prayer and entertains in his soul high and holy projects need not fear the obstacles to success, however powerful and entrenched they may be.

O God, we seek thy help in order that we may live as we pray! Help us not only to present our petitions to thee, but to place ourselves at thy disposal, that so those petitions may be answered! May we not be afraid as we go about doing thy work! For Christ's sake. Amen.

Friday, 10th. Nehemiah 2. 12-20.

Nehemiah was statesman as well as saint. He prayed much, but he also used his brains. When he was maturing his plans he liked to be alone. After receiving the report of Hanani he went away by himself, and now that he has arrived in Jerusalem he seeks the shadow of night and the utmost privacy for his survey of conditions and the maturing of his plans. Big men are usually silent men.

Adeney says: "The reformation that is planned by the student at his desk, without any reference to the actual state of affairs, will be, at best, a Utopian dream. Most schemes of socialism, though they spring from the brains of amiable enthusiasts, break up like empty bubbles on the first contact with the real world. It is especially necessary, too, to know the worst. Opportunism is very cheering in idea, but when it is indulged in to the neglect of truth, with an impatient disregard for the shady side of life, it simply leads its devotees into a fool's paradise. The highest idealist must have something of the realist in him if he would ever have his ideas transformed into facts."

Having ascertained the facts and matured his plans, Nehemiah revealed the second attribute of statesmanship: he took other people into his confidence, and sought their coöperation. He believed that knowledge of the facts would make coöperation inevitable. He showed that this reformation must not be a one man affair. He appealed to the highest impulses, patriotism and reverence. He raised the whole enterprize to the highest platform. He is working with God and for God. He believes that nothing less than a religious impulse will ever carry people forward to a great enterprize when there are difficulties in the way, and opposition and criticism to be encountered. He also believes that the fact of his enterprize having the king's endorsement would make it popular with the people.

Who could resist such a spirit? No wonder that the people rallied, and that every one had a mind to work.

Almighty God, we seek wisdom in doing thy work! Restrain us from impatience, and also from too easy discouragement! Help us to give all our powers to thy service! Teach us how to work with others! Grant that we may not grow weary in well-doing! Amen.

Saturday, 11th. Nehemiah 3. 1-7.

There are 42 portions of work enumerated in this chapter. The record is obviously incomplete. It is a most important chapter for those who are interested in the history of Jerusalem; our immediate purpose will be served if we turn our attention to the names of some of the builders.

It is interesting to notice the human element in this story. Eliashib belonged to the opposite party to Nehemiah. A good deal of bitterness characterized their controversies, but Nehemiah does not fail in courtesy. He places Eliashib first, and thus shows his recognition of the office which he held and of the loyal coöperation in the task of building the walls which he displayed. On the other hand, we must appreciate the character of a man like Eliashib, who did not allow differences of opinion to interfere with his coöperation in a movement as far reaching and important as the building of the walls. As to this difference Davies says, "Later on there arose a schism between Nehemiah and his reforming party on the one hand, and Eliashib and the laxer (or broader?) party on the other, the principal occasions for which were the following incidents: Being related by marriage to Tobiah, Eliashib made it possible for the latter to enter the priesthood though not of priestly descent, and actually allotted him one of the chambers in the Temple area. All this happened in Nehemiah's absence, so he himself is careful to tell us. On his return this anomaly was rectified, Tobiah being expelled from his office and chamber. Soon after this courageous act the Jewish reformer felt it his duty to dismiss from the priesthood the grandson of Eliashib because he had allied himself by marriage with Sanballat the Horonite."

The opposition to Nehemiah sprang from the upper classes. These were the people who thought that they should be allowed to regulate their lives according to their own fancies, and resisted any restriction in personal liberty. We see the same characteristics today. Many in our own land resent any interference with what they call their personal freedom. Hence they would rather revert to the miseries and horrors of drink-sodden cities than willingly conform to the law of the land.

Our Father, we pray that when thy peo-

ple are called upon to do hard things, we may be found among those who are willing to give themselves and all their powers to help forward the task! Forgive us if we have stood aloof and critical when we ought to have been building the walls! For Christ's sake. Amen.

Sunday, 12th. Nehemiah 3. 23-32.

We do not omit the intervening verses as though they were of less importance, but simply because the reiteration of names means little to us. It means much to us, however, to realize that these men were named because they willingly coöperated in a great social undertaking. They did not shrug their shoulders and say that such work was beneath them, they had so much to do in connection with their own business, the proper policy was to hire the necessary assistance. They put themselves into the task. They meant that as time advanced, and men looked on the strength of the walls and bulwarks of Jerusalem, and sang of their glory, there should arise in the hearts of their children a sense of personal pride in that their ancestors helped to build them. And this is a great privilege. Every man ought to put himself into his city. Merely to live in a place, to make money there, is not enough: we should make the place worthy of self-respecting men.

The next thing to notice is that all types of men associated in the work. Rulers are associated with priests and men of the plains, or low lying districts about the Jordan, the Tekoaites and the keeper of the East gate, the goldsmith's son and the merchants and tradesmen. Some worked opposite their own homes, some opposite their neighbor's, but all found themselves at one in a common task.

There is no other way of breaking down caste and the antagonisms of class distinctions save by coöperative effort for the common good. Men associated for business need to see something more than their immediate task. These goldsmiths and merchants were located near the Temple, finding in the requirements of worship occasion for personal profit. Happily they showed themselves more than business men intent on personal gain: they revealed a real interest in their city, and were glad to coöperate in its protection.

The history of great cities bears ample proof of the capacity of the merchants to see the need of great significant things in city life. They have been the founders of colleges and benevolent institutions, patrons of art and music, promoters of civic betterment.

O God, we thank thee for our common life, for the necessities which drive us to seek each other's aid, for the impulses that inspire us to unite for the common weal! Help us to see our city as the city of God, to build its walls, to make it beautiful and secure! Amen.

Monday, 13th. Nehemiah 4. 1-6.

We are listening to the words of men who are in open opposition.

Sanballat is in a rage. He is provoked at the development of a work for which he has contempt, a work carried on by men who refuse to recognize him, and who decline to allow their children to intermarry with Samaritans. He hastily summoned the nobles and the citizens' army on which they depended in times of emergency, and presented the situation in contemptuous tones. He despised the religious motive. Fancy any people leaving the issue of their lives with God! It was carrying religion too far to let it become the dictation of political and social movements. Things are not so easily accomplished, the work is of too gigantic proportions.

Tobiah tries ridicule. He is contemptuous of a movement headed by a courtier and supported by such impractical men.

Ridicule and criticism, accompanied by such aggressive qualities as are being displayed, rouse Nehemiah. He shows himself as sensitive to insult. He resents the taunt and the threat of opposition. His resentment expresses itself in prayer.

It is not the kind of prayer we think appropriate. Nehemiah, however, is unable to think of his people and his work apart from God. An insult offered to them is aimed at God. His soul is aroused. What do these people know about the feelings of those who have been in exile? Who is it who dares to despise the devotion, the service, rendered by men and women who have risked all in a holy adventure? He would have men who despise high and holy things erased from the names of those who are recognized as belonging to God. Nehemiah remembers that Sanballat and his friends are dwelling in Jehovah's land, and in a sense may have been enjoying his protection. Their churlish spirit surely disentitles them to any continuance of divine favor, therefore let their names be blotted out of the book of life.

He who would judge Nehemiah must first know that he is himself as loyal to God and men, to truth and justice, and also that he is as self-sacrificing and courageous. Yet because our Master was more loyal, courageous and self-sacrificing than Nehemiah, we must remember that the Christ way is to pray, "Father, forgive them, they know not what they do!"

However deeply Nehemiah and his helpers resented the ridicule and opposition of Sanballat and the Samaritans, they did not allow it to interfere with their enthusiasm. It was a people's movement, and it went forward until every gap was filled, and the wall was a completed thing, and the debris was cleared away

Our Father, when the path of duty is

plain, give us courage to walk in it! May thy peace guard us from fear and fretfulness! May we go forth rejoicing in thy companionship! Thus may we do all to thy honor and glory! Amen.

Tuesday, 14th. Nehemiah 4. 7-23.

The combination against Nehemiah and his comrades aggregated a considerable force. The internal administration of the Persian Empire would be insufficient to prevent petty feuds among the subject races. The satraps took little notice of the ceaseless disputes between the tributary towns and nationalities on the frontier.

The occasion for the alliance was the report of the successful progress of the movement for the rebuilding of the walls. Ridicule may be a handy weapon in the days when movements are being planned and initiated, but if they go forward enthusiastically, ridicule turns to angry resentment. Hence the secret messages to the alliance to come and fight against the Jews. It was thought that a sudden display of force would demoralize the Jews. So many men would be needed for battle that the rest would not be willing to continue and complete the building. But wicked men are usually stupid. They fail to appreciate the force of a religious campaign. They imagine that praying men are impractical.

Nehemiah organized his resources. First among his defences he places prayer, then watchfulness. At this point Nehemiah meets a different sort of difficulty. It arises from the complaint that on account of the amount of debris to be cleared the workers are working beyond their strength and becoming discouraged. Now the foes that lurk within are more dangerous than the legions of armed foes gathered around the walls. Nothing can be done if the spirit of the defenders is broken. The men who spoke to Nehemiah were not in mutiny, they were overstrained. At this very moment Nehemiah hears through spies and in other ways that his enemies are planning a surprise attack. This is followed by a panic among the Jews who lived outside the city walls. They came rushing into the city, entreating them to seek safety ere it was too late.

What did Nehemiah do? He organized his resources again, converting every builder into a soldier, and every soldier into a builder. He provided swords, spears and bows; exhorted to courage, to faith in God, to valor on behalf of home and loved ones. The effect was immediate. His enemies found their plot uncovered, and thought twice about acting. Nehemiah did not mean to leave anything to chance. He divided his forces, and while half of them did the building the other half stood sentinel. The builders learned to gird their swords to their sides so that their hands might be free for their building.

Here is a lesson for modern statesmen. Nothing is more demoralizing than to keep a regiment in barracks. By all means train men to defend their country, but do not take them wholly from lawful industry. Let them work!

Nehemiah continues to emphasize his great ally. "Our God shall fight for us." An army so reinforced is invincible.

Teach us, O Lord, how to meet our enemies! Make us aware of our resources! Help us to live strong, resolute, God-fearing lives! If our enemies seek to take us by craftiness, give us the power to outwit their subtlety! In all circumstances may we know that thou art our champion! Amen.

Wednesday, 15th. Nehemiah 5. 1-5.

It frequently happens that men of one idea unwittingly inflict hardships on others. Nehemiah had challenged the people to a great enterprize. He had not bargained with them. They did not receive wages for their toil. Each man was called upon to labor from the highest motives, and each had responded nobly. But this meant that they had little time in which to earn their living. Moreover, the cost of material was high. Hence many found themselves compelled to borrow money at high rates of interest, and those who lent money required prompt and full payment. The result was that Jews were having to enslave themselves to Jews, and this was intolerable. The complaint came from the masses. For a man to sell himself is not as intolerable as to have to sell his children.

Davies says: "We do not find among the Jews in Bible times any system of laws or customs governing the relation of lender and borrower, such, for example, as prevailed among the Babylonians in the time of Hammurabi; though even among them such laws were less complete than one would gather from some authors. Among the Hebrews, as generally among the Babylonians, loans were made to the poor alone for the purpose of meeting special emergencies. Lending as an investment, with the expectation of a good return, was hardly known in those times. The fact that at this time there was a capitalist or rich class shows that there had been a large return of exiles many years earlier, for the Jews left behind were poor, and belonged to the least important families."

One wonders at the apparent ignorance of the people on the priestly law contained in Exodus 22. 25; Deuteronomy 23. 19, 20; Leviticus 25. 35-37. That law provides that all alienated property should be restored at the end of seven years. Were they ignorant of the law, or did they regard it as Utopian? We know how easy it is for ourselves to disregard certain positive teaching even of Jesus Christ our Lord: we pretend that it is Utopian. Most of us are inclined to assert our individual rights and privileges against the needs of society. We are nec-

essarily disloyal to Christ, or men and women of perverted ideas, because we fail in this respect. We have failed to respond to the highest because our emotions have not been kindled by a sense of the infinite love of God.

Almighty God, teach us how to render service! Deliver us from the bargaining spirit! May we learn to labor for love's sake! If we suffer loss or impoverishment, come to our aid! Help us to believe that thou knowest the things we need, and wilt supply them! Amen.

Thursday, 16th. Nehemiah 5. 6-13.

Every sentence in this passage is deserving of study.

Nehemiah says that his immediate reaction was a sense of moral indignation at the failure in brotherhood implied in the complaint. In the next place, he did not fly off the handle: he took counsel of his own heart, that is to say, he went away by himself and viewed the whole problem in the light of conscience and reason. A man whose conscience and reason have been organized in response to a feeling of wrong is vastly more to be feared than one who is simply passionate and denunciatory.

Nehemiah then called the nobles and rulers, and stated the charge against them. Ryle says: "Nehemiah himself exacted interest upon loans. We are not, therefore, to suppose that his indignation was directed against the practice of usury, but against the hard-heartedness and covetousness of the usurers. Mere denunciation against their moral failings would have availed nothing. He wisely puts in the foreground of his expostulations the general statement that the Jews were practising usury against their brethren. He implies that this was contrary to the spirit of the law and to good fellowship. He himself sought to relieve his brethren, but he and his companions had, he confessed, given way to the custom of the time, and had lent on usury, although he had not been exacting in his demands. He and the professional moneylenders had both done wrong. He had been merciful, and they had not. This was the only difference. On the general principle he therefore proposed that all taking of interest from needy fellow countrymen should be abandoned. His manner of approaching the subject conciliated the rulers, as he associated himself with the wrongdoing."

Here is a lesson for us. We shall accomplish more by associating ourselves with others than by talking at them. It is better to say, "All we like sheep have gone astray," than to say, "All ye have gone astray."

The nobles responded solemnly, promptly, religiously to the appeal. Jehovah was called upon to witness to their oath. A leader who could produce such results by argument rather than by force must have been a remarkable man. Nehemiah's power lay in three things: his awareness of God's presence, his power to think his plans through before speech or action, and his directness of appeal combined with a high respect for the moral integrity of the people.

Our Father, grant that we may never lose sight of the largest interests in life! Teach us to live as brethren, and to place the happiness and wellbeing of our neighbors above our own material enrichment! Grant that the world may never obscure the demands of high and noble living! Amen.

Friday, 17th. Nehemiah 5. 14-19.

We have here a piece of autobiography of great interest and importance It shows that Nehemiah was not a professional politician. His service to his king as to his fellow countrymen was freely and gladly rendered. He was a man of ample wealth, and therefore free to render to his time the largest and most generous service. Other governors had been paid for their services out of the taxation of the people. Nehemiah was entitled to such rewards, but refrained from taking them. Like Paul he intended to be beholden to no man save in the matter of love, and love he would pay to the uttermost.

How frequently rich people fail to realize their privilege! They have education, power, prestige, opportunity, but they are mere lookers-on. Compare the confessions of Henry Adams with this passage from Nehemiah, and realize the pathos of one who could have been a great American allowing his life to peter out through lack of a moral and altruistic purpose.

Why did Nehemiah behave in this way? He says the fear of God constrained him. "His motive was not the desire for popularity with his countrymen, but the recognition of the divine presence in all things quickened his sense of duty." The example of Nehemiah constrained those who were nearest to him, and they refrained from availing themselves of all opportunities even for acquiring property, lest their purchase when prices were so low might enrich themselves at the expense of those who were living under economic pressure. Nehemiah was also at considerable charges in the matter of hospitality. The upkeep of such an establishment meant the straining of his private resources, but that did not matter. He had undertaken a great task out of love for Jehovah and a desire for his glory. He would rather have the blessing of God than great riches.

Ryle says of his prayer: "Nehemiah prays with frank simplicity that God will recognize and reward his services to the people of Israel. In our ears the self-complacency strikes a jarring note, but the words must not be judged by our modern standard. Their quaint candor quite disarms the charge of vanity. It is the ejaculation of a practical man, keenly alive to the re-

sponsibility of his position, very conscious of his loneliness, and sensible of the moral effort which it costs him at every fresh endeavor to please Jehovah in the service of the people."

O God, teach us our indebtedness to thee and to thy world! Thou hast redeemed us at great cost. Thou hast placed us in a beneficent world. Thou hast caused us to possess a goodly inheritage. Help us to live grateful lives! Amen.

Saturday, 18th. Nehemiah 6.

The caution displayed by Nehemiah was not due to fear or apprehension of his personal safety. It is true that Sanballat and Geshem were plotting to have him assassinated, but his motive in staying away was not simply or chiefly self-preservation, but the consciousness that he was essential in this hour of his people's lives. Failing in their attempt at ambuscade, Sanballat sent an open letter charging Nehemiah with treasonable intentions, and that he meant to have himself crowned king. It was a malicious and brazen attack, and was met in the manner it deserved.

Nehemiah knew how to say things in few words. There is a good deal of wisdom in the refusal to send business letters that exceed one page in length, and also in the demand for short sermons and speeches. There are few ideas that cannot be expressed in few words. It would perfect and elevate the style if men would learn to speak and write briefly and clearly.

The object of this attack was to demoralize Nehemiah and those who supported him. The great man met such attacks by prayer. His prayer was an ejaculation, but it was more eloquent than a liturgy.

Turning from the intrigues and threats of his foes, Nehemiah faces the more insidious dangers from those inside the walls. Shemaiah tried to prey on his nerves. The answer given shows the poise and balance of Nehemiah's mind. Man may speak in God's name without divine authority. Not every man is a preacher who uses sacred rhetoric. Nehemiah paid attention to the ethical qualities of the counsel given by one who professed to be a prophet. As a matter of fact, Shemaiah was a base traitor, who had sold his office for money and belonged to the tribe of Balaam. Along with the name of Shemaiah is given the name of Noadiah, a prophetess who had sold her spiritual womanhood to the unscrupulous men who sought to entrap one of the greatest patriots her own or any other nation has known.

Threats and intrigues alike failed. The work was completed in all its details. The success of the undertaking proved most disconcerting to the Samaritans and their allies. It was recognized that something more than human genius and power lay behind the undertaking.

O God, help us in the midst of our distresses to call upon thy name! May we believe that thou art on our side! When we undertake to do thy work may we learn to leave the issue with thee! Thou will never leave us, nor forsake us. Give us faith, courage, patience, in Christ's name! Amen.

Sunday, 19th. Nehemiah 7. 1-7; 66-73.

Ryle says: "The porters were a guild whose ordinary duty it was to guard the entrances and defences of the Temple. In the unsettled state of affairs, when he was in constant expectation of attacks from without and was conscious of intrigues going on within the walls, Nehemiah entrusted the protection of the whole city to this body of trained police, and augmented their force by other available trained bands, i.e., the musicians and the main body of Levites. They were already a disciplined and organized set of men. The great majority apparently could be relied on to support the policy of Nehemiah and Ezra. Nehemiah put the keeping of the walls into their hands, with the duty of superintending the watch, and of organizing a system of sentinel work among the citizens themselves. The fact that Nehemiah thus trusted these Levites and Temple servants indicates that they sympathized with him in his scheme of a religious constitution for the Jews which would completely exclude the Samaritan and the foreigner."

The list of families given here, as in Ezra 2, is calculated to do three things. It gives the names of those who were prepared to put faith in God and fatherland before earthly comfort. They were men and women who paid the price of their convictions, and paid it with joy. It chronicles those who took their share of labor and sacrifice in the rebuilding of the city of God. It also demonstrated the importance of a pure breed race. We are prone to neglect the most important factor in eugenics. We think of physical fitness, whereas the Bible thinks just as much of and gives priority to the consideration of identity of religious and ethical standards. Some day Christian men and women will awake to the importance of marriages in the Lord.

Our God and Father, teach us our high privilege as thy children! Help us to live separated lives! May we prize the heritage of faith bequeathed to us by our fathers! Help us to regulate our affections and desires according to thy word! Amen.

Monday, 20th. Nehemiah 8. 1-8.

There are three expressions in this chapter which appeal to us, "the book," "the congregation," "the pulpit." Who can calculate their influence?

The book means the roll, for the bound volume was unknown in those days. The law means teaching or instruction, and

applies especially to the revelation of the divine will through prophets and priests.

The congregation consisted of every one possessing intelligence enough to hear and understand. That included all but very young children. Boys and girls were expected to go to the house of God, and were trained to listen and to think over what was said. Why is it considered unreasonable that a child who will be expected to take a lesson in arithmetic extending over 40 minutes, or a lesson in music, should listen to a sermon on the most interesting and important subject in the world?

The pulpit was probably more of a platform or rostrum than the conventional pulpit or lectern found in many Christian churches. It was high and roomy, it may have been large enough for fourteen men, it was built for a purpose.

During the reading of the law the congregation stood as a token of respect, just as we stand to sing our national anthem and to salute the flag. On the other hand, when prayer was being offered the people bowed themselves as a token of humility before Jehovah. The reading of the law was so clear, through the interpreting word of the reader, that every one was able to understand what it meant. How different from our method of reading the Scriptures in public worship! We read words written in a strange tongue to a strange people, and no effort is made to give the sense.

O God, grant that we may be numbered among those who remember thee! Help us to hear and obey thy word! May we treasure the Scriptures, and walk in the light of their teaching! Grant that those who proclaim thy word may have thy blessing! Amen.

Tuesday, 21st. Nehemiah 8. 9-18.

A true sabbath is a happy day, and public worship the most inspiring and soulful exercise. A consciousness of shortcoming is a salutary thing, but high achievement comes through a recognition of the significance of the divine speech with mortals. If God regards us and speaks to us, we must be men and women of worth. We shall please him when our souls are stirred with generous emotions.

"The joy of the Lord is your stronghold." Ryle says: "This joy of the Lord is not the joy of the Lord over Israel, but Israel's joy in her Lord. Israel's joy at her great festivals is based on her confidence that the Lord ever protects her. Gladness in him is in proportion to the faith in the protection which he gives. He that rejoices in Jehovah has a strong fortress from which he can repel all adversaries."

The service ended splendidly. Everyone felt that he had received a message, and that its effect should reveal itself in generous neighborliness. Multitudes were happier because of the people who had been to public worship.

The Feast of Tabernacles was organized through making acquaintance with the Scriptures. It was a great glad feast, one of the most wonderful in the history of the world. If men knew their Bibles better, family life, social life, national life would be reorganized, men would live more humanely, the organized life of the community would find room for laughter and song, labor would be considered to be a dignified and worthy thing.

Thirteen days were spent in preparation. Clergy and laymen united in the task. The feast itself lasted for seven days, and was followed by a solemn assembly. Truly there were ideals embedded in Hebrew life which if rediscovered would transform society in any period!

Our Father, we pray for grateful hearts! So often we forget thy benefits, and cease to speak of thy excellent greatness. Teach us the glory of thy power! Thou didst bring again from the dead our Lord Jesus Christ, and such power thou dost make available on our behalf. Help us to yield ourselves to that power. Amen.

Wednesday, 22nd. Nehemiah 9.

Worship is not all thanksgiving. The optimist can be very shallow. If he does not realize human need, human responsibility, the tragedy of human failure, the high responsibility to a disciplined, holy life, he is shallow indeed.

Life is not all melancholy. We need the inspiration of joy. We also need the quiet, solemn consideration and confession of our personal and social sins. Especially do we need the confession of social sin. The church is lacking in a sense of vicarious living. The service which the Hebrews now rendered was offered as a separated people. There were occasions when others might meet with them, but there are some things which the world does not apprehend and thinks little about. The world does not realize the sinfulness of sin, it does not appreciate the significance of social injustice. So the church of the separated meets not because it is better, but because it is more responsible.

Confession is followed by thanksgiving. It is addressed to "the glorious name." We can add nothing to the glory by our praise, but we can recognize and delight in it. We can recognize the solitary majesty of God. His glory is not divided with any. He has not simply made a world: he lives in it and operates through it. He has not started humanity on its way and then detached himself. He is carrying on his selective process, constraining Abraham and his followers to trek forward in search of a city invisible. He is urging the Hebrews to cease to accept their serfdom, and to cross sandy wastes and mountain steeps and raging torrents in quest of freedom. He is creating within them a sense of re-

sponsibility, instructing them through law and prophet, creating institutions, reproving failures, delivering from perils, building up, pulling down, but ever guiding towards a sense of life's possibilities.

Out of such reflections a challenge comes, and these people, solemnized, dignified, are called upon to commit themselves to a new way of living. History challenges them, experience inspires them, let them give themselves altogether unto the Lord!

Dear Lord, we pray thee for the Christ-like spirit! May we learn to bear other people's sorrows! Give us also a deeper sense of our responsibility for the conditions prevailing in our own time! May we learn to serve! For Jesus' sake! Amen.

Thursday, 23rd. Nehemiah 10. 1, 28-39.

The participants in the covenant were representative of the nation. There were many dissentients, and some of the more extreme resolutions were found to be difficult, if not impossible, of execution. Nevertheless there was a notable list of priests, Levites and nobles, headed by Nehemiah and his lieutenant, and these were supported by many others, including some who had never been in exile but who appreciated the significance of the new movement.

The separation of the homes of Israel from all other homes was an extreme measure. It might be carried too far. It might become legalistic, and ignore the things of the spirit. That is true of all movements. The first emphasis is right, but we have to remember that the letter killeth while the spirit giveth life.

A second aspect of the movement had to do with sabbath observance. It is difficult to maintain a compromise on such a subject. Religious men must resolve to keep it altogether, or else make their assemblies deliberate acts in the midst of ordinary every day life. The reference to the sabbatic year does not mean that debts were cancelled, but that payments were suspended so as to give the debtor a chance of recovery. A good man will try to help his debtee get on to his feet. No man suffers in business who tries to help his customers.

The imposition of a poll tax for the maintenance of the Temple worship raises an interesting point. Apparently voluntary assessment would not work. The poor left it to the rich, the rich gave disproportionately. Hence every one was assessed an equal amount. This was not all that man gave, but rich and poor were placed on a common basis of giving. If every church member gave in this proportion for church maintenance there would be no lack. Evidently, however, nature is the same everywhere.

O God, may we be found among the children of the covenant! Give us grace to come out from among the ungodly, and to touch not the unclean thing! Help us to discipline our lives! May our habits be worthy, may we learn to be generous and thoughtful in our support of thy work! Amen.

Friday, 24th. Nehemiah 11. 1-3; 20-25.

It seems strange that any one should be anxious to make a city big in numbers. Cities should grow naturally. But the problem confronting Nehemiah was this: he had rebuilt a city which originally was one of the largest and most densely populated in the known world. How is such a city to be maintained? It needs people to occupy its houses, it needs taxpayers, it needs defenders. As a rule people from the country do not need to be urged to come to the cities. The situation made it impossible for the leaders to wait for normal, ordinary development.

Some were chosen by lot, some went of their own accord and were hailed as patriots. Evidently there was real danger of the enemies of Nehemiah organizing an attack. The lists of names show us the varied life of the community: soldiers and priests, musicians and poets, those who organized the worship of the house of God, the porters who were a sort of police, and the keepers of the gates.

It is evident that Artaxerxes had kept in touch with the movement, and had expressed his preferences for certain things, as, for example, the maintenance of a musical service for every day of the year. There evidently was a representative of the Jews at the Persian court whose business it was to keep the king thoroughly informed as to all movements. While everything was done to people and to organize the life of Jerusalem, the other cities of Judah were not ignored. Everything was done to stabilize and make attractive the life of the people committed to Nehemiah's care.

We thank thee, our Father, for the vision of the heavenly city! Help us to live as its enfranchized citizens! Forgive us if our language and deportment have not been consistent with its standards and ideals! Amen.

Saturday, 25th. Nehemiah 12. 27-47.

The author now returns to the annals of Nehemiah. Ryle says: "It is only natural to suppose that the dedication of the walls took place at no long interval after their completion. The walls were finished on the 25th of the month Elul, or September. According to 2 Maccabees 1. 18 Nehemiah on the 25th of Chislev (December) celebrated the restoration of the altar. If this date may be relied upon as representing a true tradition of the solemn dedication described in these verses, exactly three months elapsed between the completion and the dedication of the walls." Some think

that Psalms 122 and 147 may have been sung on this occasion.

The dedication of the walls was regarded as a holy thing, and those who participated in it recognized the need of special consecration to God. Would that men today would regard the building of their city in that spirit! Two processions were formed, and each gave thanks as it proceeded with its beautiful but solemn task. Their city was to be a holy place.

Religious men are learning once more the importance of tithing. In ancient days it was a law, now it is a voluntary act of consecration, unless we are prepared to say that the laws of the spirit are no less binding because written not on tables of stone but on tables of the heart. Priest, Levite, guard, chorister, each and all were treated with respect. Each was free from worry. Each had his daily salary. The recompense, whether large or small, was a reward for holy service, and was consecrated to a sacred use.

Are we learning to organize our service of praise? We are very prone to leave things to the caprice of those who think more of the technique of song than of its spirit and purpose. One of our hymnologists says,

> Fill thou my life, O Lord my God,
> In every part with praise!

and this should be the spirit with which we enter on our various engagements in the service of God.

Our Father, we would learn to build our cities, our homes, our business, as acts of worship! Help us to regard our work with joy, and to dedicate it to thy service! Help us also to undertake our duties in a spirit of consecration! May we live and work as thy servants! Amen.

Sunday, 26th. Nehemiah 13. 1-9.

We now come to one of the most delicate situations in Nehemiah's career. He, like Ezra, aimed at developing a loyal, God-fearing, nation-loving people. He found himself involved in all manner of difficult circumstances. At times he had to exercise force in order to give effect to his policy.

Why did he consider mixed marriages dangerous? The first three verses give one reason. Deuteronomy 23. 3-5 forbade the children of Israel having any intercourse with the Ammonites and Moabites.

Now, however, Nehemiah has had to return to Susa to report to and confer with his king. Why he had to go we do not know. A year or more elapsed, and in the interval many things happened. On his return he found Eliashib condoning the very things he had endeavored to eradicate. Tobiah, who was not a priest, who was a foreigner, had married a Jewess, and moreover had been allowed to occupy chambers in the sacred area. Indeed, two or three chambers had been thrown into one to accommodate him. It was an outrage and an affront. If Nehemiah were to condone the action of the high priest, the cause for which he had been working through twelve strenuous and perilous years would be at an end. Drastic action was necessary. Nehemiah asserted his power as governor, and forcibly ejected Tobiah and all his effects, and had the place fumigated and cleansed. The action shows that Nehemiah was a real leader, and not to be trifled with. He could be kind, patient, generous to a fault, but in times of moral crisis he was adamant. Every good man knows that there are situations in which compromise is utterly impossible. Luther knew it, and his daring act won the Reformation.

Almighty God, take from us the love of man which bringeth a snare! Teach us how to act so as to cleanse men from impurity, and to build up society after a divine pattern! Give us the spirit of Christ, that we may act so as to please thee! Amen.

Monday, 27th. Nehemiah 13. 10-31.

Here is a strange situation! Ministers of religion have been left with their salaries unpaid because the people have defaulted with their contributions. To have stayed at their tasks would have meant starvation. They therefore dispersed, and went where they could earn a living. We find a similar state of affairs denounced in Malachi.

Some of our modern problems have a strange similarity to those of ancient days. Only the leaders know how many good men have been forced to abandon the ministry during the past decade.

Nehemiah was just as incisive in dealing with this situation as with the others. He holds the rulers responsible. His charge is expressed in seven words, "Why is the house of God forsaken?" He found four men who could be trusted, and to these he committed the matter, with immediate effect.

Nehemiah begins to realize that his days are numbered. He prays that his mercies and kindnesses may not be wiped out of the divine records of his stewardship. Is he thinking of his good deeds in their relation to the servants of God, or of God himself? It is evident that he is thinking of his life in its relation to God. He does his work with the thought of pleasing God and in response to God's mercies and kindnesses to him.

Another of the acts of the returned governor had to do with sabbath observance. Ryle says, "The observance of the sabbath was always the stumbling block in the way of free relations between the pious Jew and the Gentile. The temptation to desecrate the sabbath in order to maintain amicable relations with Gentile traders was a constant source of religious degeneracy among the Jews." It seems that the diffi-

culty lay in the receiving of produce on the sabbath so as to be ready for business on the Monday. It is the insidious temptation for the merchant or the banker to use Sunday for quiet reflection and laying of plans. Nehemiah had to end the business by drastic action, warning the foreign merchants to keep away.

Nehemiah's last problem, however, was with mixed marriages. He found people married to those who could not speak Hebrew. and his anger became so great that he lost his dignity and began to revile them, and to strike and threaten them. Evidently the battle was becoming hopeless, and Nehemiah was recognizing the fact. Otherwise he would never have lost his balance. He got a temporary victory by the harsh measures evoked, but he was clearly fighting against organized opposition.

The annals break off with prayer. He would live and die in the divine remembrance, and feels the favor of God his richest reward.

Our Father, help us to be imitators of those who have placed thy love and favor before life itself! Give us vision and faith! Help us to continue in well doing when discouraged and baffled! Lift us up when we fall! Grant that we may live and die as thy servants! Amen.

ESTHER.

Tuesday, 28th. Esther 1.

Our interpretation of Esther must proceed along different lines from those followed hitherto, because this book is of an entirely different character. It is a book worth reading if we come to it in the right way.

Esther has not always been considered a part of our Bible. The Septuagint has a very much longer version than our Bible, but the additions were obviously not a part of the original. The Apocrypha collects these verses together as a supplement to the Bible version. It is one of five books known as the "Holy Things." One of these books was read at each of the great feasts: Ruth at Pentecost, Lamentations on the ninth of Ab, commemorating the destruction of Jerusalem in 586 B. C., Ecclesiastes at the Feast of Tabernacles, the Song of Songs at the Passover, Esther at the Feast of Purim.

Esther is notable for its silences. It never mentions or refers to God, it refers to no other portion of the Old Testament, it ignores the law, Jerusalem, the Temple, sacrifice. The only feast mentioned is Purim, and that had a secular origin. It is interested in what advantages the Jew, but not in Judaism. The author is evidently a Jew who has never lived in the Holy Land. "Luther wished the book did not exist," Ewald said; "its story knows nothing of high and pure truths. In it we fall as it were from heaven to earth."

Why was the book written? Its object was connected with the Festival of Purim. You will not find religion in it, unless patriotism is religion. But patriotism is a great and noble virtue, without which people might easily lose their soul.

Our God, we thank thee for our land, for its traditions, its institutions, its laws! We pray that our national sins may be forgiven. Help us to honor thee by our love of virtue, our hatred of sin and oppression, our desire to promote reverence, righteousness and peace! Amen.

Wednesday, 29th. Esther 2.

In trying to identify the personalities in this book all agree that Ahasuerus was Xerxes, who reigned from 485-465 B. C. His kingdom is said to extend from India, or the land watered by the Indus, to Ethiopia, which stands for Nubia. The scene opens in the palace at Susa where Xerxes was giving a banquet to certain officials and courtiers. This banquet was followed by another for certain distinguished persons in the empire, as well as visitors. The whole event was characterized by great splendor, and must have been organized in connection with some great event. A great deal of drunkenness characterized it. The feast organized by Vashti was also lavish.

Whether Vashti is the same woman as Amestris whom Herodotus tells us was the wife of Xerxes, and from whom the king secured a divorce, but whom he afterwards remarried, we do not know. It is not impossible. At any rate, the advisers of the king reported that there was no precedent on which to base proceedings against Vashti for her actions. They feared that the queen's conduct might lead to insubordination among women everywhere, and therefore they advised her deposition. The king accepted their advice, and then lived to rue it, for he loved Vashti, and began to feel that he had treated her in a cruel manner.

There are difficulties about what follows if we look for literal history, because the Persian kings were restricted in their choice of queens to one of seven Persian noble families, though they might have concubines.

Many Jews were congregated in and about Susa, some as soldiers, some as artizans, some as merchants and bankers. Among these was the family to which Mordecai and Esther belonged. Esther was sometimes spoken of as Myrtle, sometimes as Star. Her very names were musical.

Apparently the choice of Esther was looked upon as a social success. She did not appear to find any embarrassment from her contact with heathen people, a fact which reveals her general attitude of mind. In fact, she was able to hide her Jewish origin so as to escape discovery. For a year she was to prepare herself by eating an appointed diet, by cosmetics, and other

means of enchancing personal beauty. When Esther's hour came, she had no hesitancy about her ability to charm the king.

Could it be that the king's interest in her was the secret cause of his failure in the campaign against the Greeks? A tragedy such as occurred must have had an explanation.

After the choice of Esther the king was indebted to Mordecai for an escape from a plot to assassinate him. Thus the story develops into one of Persian indebtedness for love and life to the Jews.

O Lord, may the fortunes of life find us worthy, may the sorrows of life find us rooted in thee! At home and abroad may we live as the citizens of heaven! Make us strong to meet all emergencies! For Christ's sake! Amen.

Thursday, 30th. Esther 3.

During the next five years there emerges the figure of Haman as prime minister or grand vizier of the Persian Empire. Haman is described as the Agagite, or the descendant of Agag the Amalekite. Some one has suggested as a parallel the appointment of Disraeli, a Jew, as British prime minister. There was the bitterest rivalry between Mordecai and Haman, a rivalry so great and intense that Mordecai openly insulted the new grand vizier. While others bowed in Oriental fashion, Mordecai refused to bow. It may be that Haman was a self-made man who had climbed from obscurity and poverty to power and wealth, for the king enjoined that he should be honored and respected by all. The action of Mordecai was considered daring by those who were lookers-on, and made an object of remonstrance, gossip and report.

Haman determines on reprisals, only he would not honor Mordecai by making it a personal quarrel. Whether there was a Jewish party led by Mordecai and sharing insubordination we know not, but anyhow Haman determines on an odious thing. He presents a report to the king that there is a gigantic conspiracy organized in every part of the empire with a view to its destruction, and he asks authority to put it down. The authority is immediately given, and might easily have been executed.

What led Haman to devise so cruel a vengeance? Adeney suggests vanity and cruelty. He says, "In the first place, it is clear that vanity is a form of magnified egotism. The vain man thinks supremely of himself, not so much in the way of self-interest, but more especially for the sake of self-glorification."

It was wounded vanity that drove Haman to such monstrous courses as have made his name a byword and hissing in all subsequent Jewish history.

O God, teach us the proneness of our hearts to wander from thee! Forbid it that we should hide our attachment to thee! May we so live that men everywhere will attach our names to thy cause! Thou hast redeemed us; we are thine! Help us ever to confess thee! Amen.

Friday, 31st. Esther 4.

There is something human about the picture of Esther. Her character is truly feminine. She first appears as a young woman of ambition who believes in her power to charm the king. She hides her Jewish origin, not being willing that religion or nationality should interfere with success. On the other hand, she is deeply attached to Mordecai, and anything that concerns his happiness is of moment to her. She hears of his presence at the gate, and does what she can to assuage his grief.

When the decree is sent to her she sees no reason to involve herself in affairs of state. If she can retain her own position why exert herself? And any way why should she face the hazard of seeking the king's presence unbidden? For thirty days there has been silence between them; evidently affairs of state or of love are disturbing him, and her intrusion might mean death. When at last the truth is driven home that silence also means death, she is roused to action, and the first suggestion of a possible reference to the value of religion occurs. "Fast ye for three days for me!" is equivalent to saying, "Pray for me!" She avoids reference to God; why? Had her social ambitions made her worldly-minded, and had she affected an indifference to religion which only an hour of peril could stir into life?

Adeney takes a higher view of the queen's character. Esther is a heroine,—capable, energetic, brave, and patriotic. The splendor of her career is seen in this very fact, that she does not succumb to the luxury of her surroundings. The royal harem among the lily-beds of Shushan is like a palace in the land of the lotus-eaters, where it is always afternoon; and its inmates, in this dreamy indolence, are tempted to forget all obligations and interests beyond the obligation to please the king and their own interest in securing every comfort wealth can lavish on them. We do not look for a Boadicea in such a hot-house of narcotics, and when we find a strong, unselfish woman, such as Esther, conquering almost insuperable temptations to a life of ease, and choosing a course of terrible danger to herself for the sake of her oppressed people, we can echo the admiration of the Jews for their national heroine."

Our Father, thou art our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble! Forgive us if in our days of prosperity we forget thee, and if in our trouble we come to thee imperfectly and selfishly! We are but children before thee: have compassion on our frailties and mistakes! In Christ's name. Amen.